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DEADLY CLASS

Volume 4
THE END OF ALL

IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS

KILLADELPHIA

KILLADELPHIA Vol. Four
The End of All

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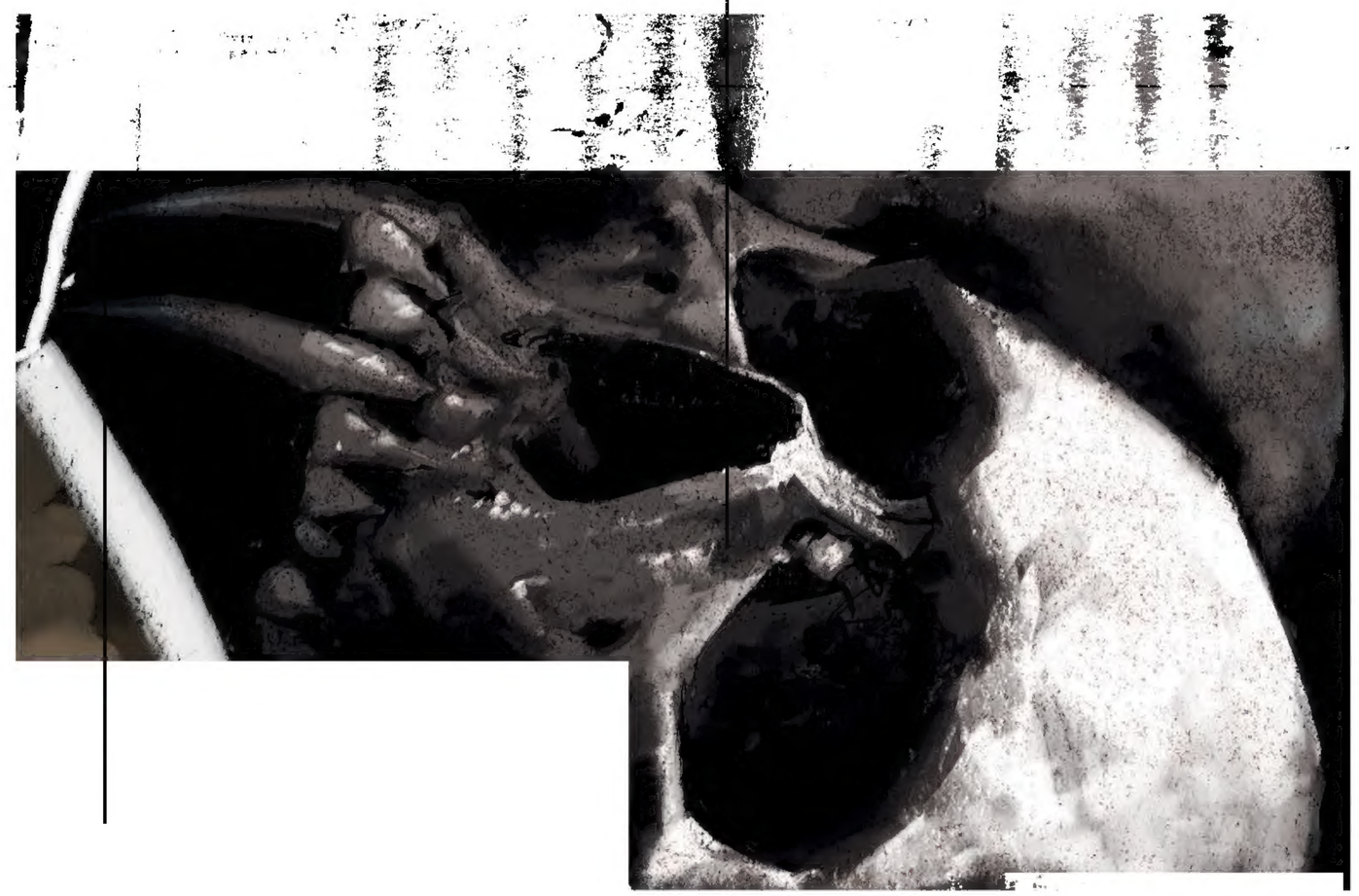
"IN WAR, ALL HOPE MUST BE REMOVED FROM ONE'S OPPONENT."

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

Chapter I



HUMANS GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO AVOID DEATH.

RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY, AND ALL MANNER OF DISTRACTIONS WERE CREATED IN THE NAME OF MAKING PEACE WITH THE REALITY THAT ONE DAY YOU WILL NO LONGER EXIST.

FROM THE MOMENT ONE IS BORN, THE SAND BEGINS ITS RELENTLESS DESCENT DOWN THE HOURGLASS.

NON-EXISTENCE IS TOUGH FOR THE EGO TO ACCEPT.

SO IT DEFIES REALITY, VIA PETTY HUMAN CONSTRUCTS.

UNTIL DEATH INEVITABLY ARRIVES.

THAT SAID, HUMANS FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT...

...DOING SO WITH PASSION AND VIGOR, EVEN IF THE ODDS ARE CLEARLY STACKED AGAINST THEM.

THOSE THAT LED PURPOSELESS EXISTENCES NOW CLING TO SAID LIVES WITH ALL THEIR MIGHT.

AFTER WITNESSING PARENTS, LOVED ONES, EVEN CHILDREN DIE.

LOGIC WOULD SUGGEST AN ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR PLIGHT...

SUCH IS NOT THE CASE.

WHAT FUELS THEM IS HOPE.

SPECIFICALLY, A SYMBOL THAT REINFORCES THE IDEA THAT NO MATTER HOW GREAT THE OBSTACLE BEFORE THEM, VICTORY IS POSSIBLE.

AND TO THEIR POINT, WHERE THERE IS HOPE, DEFEAT IS NOT CERTAIN.

IN THIS INSTANCE, SAID SYMBOL IS ONE WHO CAN BRIDGE THE CHASM BETWEEN VAMPIRE AND HUMAN, BRINGING PEACE BETWEEN PREDATOR AND PREY.

FOR MY PLAN, HUNDREDS OF YEARS IN THE MAKING, TO REACH ITS GLORIOUS CLIMAX, ALL HANGING THREADS MUST BE PULLED.

CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER HOW THEY'RE DOING.

YOU MEAN HOW ***HE'S*** DOING. IT'S OKAY TO ADMIT YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR FATHER.

FUNNY, I CAME TO PHILLY WANTING TO BURY JAMES SANGSTER, SR. NOW I'D GIVE MY RIGHT ARM TO KNOW HE'S OKAY.

HE'S DEAD, I CHECKED.

IF I DIDN'T LOVE YOU...

YOU WOULDN'T WANT ME ANY OTHER WAY.

TRUE.

JUST WISH MY MOTHER WAS HERE TO SEE HOW FAR WE'VE COME... ME AND POP.

SHE'D BE PROUD. I KNOW I AM.

WE DON'T REALLY HAVE A CHOICE.

WHAT IF HE'S GONE FOR REAL, JO? RIGHT WHEN THINGS WERE GETTING BETTER?

I PRAY THAT'S NOT THE CASE, BUT IF IT IS, WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT.

WHEN MOM DIED, IT FELT LIKE MY WORLD WAS COMING TO AN END.

IN SOME WAYS IT DID. SHE WAS TEACHING ME HOW TO... BE COMFORTABLE WITH MYSELF. THEN SHE WAS GONE. DON'T THINK I EVER TRULY FIGURED THAT OUT.

DO ANY OF US?

GUESS NOT.

THE BATTLE OF TRENTON - DECEMBER 26, 1776.

I DON'T THINK I TRULY UNDERSTOOD HOW HARD MEN WILL FIGHT IF THEY BELIEVE VICTORY IS POSSIBLE.

I WAS THEIR BEACON OF HOPE IN THAT INSTANCE. THE ONE THEY LOOKED TO TO SUBVERT THE ODDS WHICH MANY BELIEVED WERE AGAINST US.

MY SOLDIERS, SOME WHO HAD NOT EATEN OR SLEPT IN DAYS, FOUGHT WITH UNPARALLELED VALOR.

OUR OPPONENT COULD HAVE TRIPLED THEIR NUMBERS, BUT ON THIS DAY, THEIR DEFEAT WAS CERTAIN.

BECAUSE MY TROOPS **BELIEVED** THEY WOULD WIN. AND NO FORCE ON EARTH COULD CONVINCE THEM OTHERWISE.

IN WAR, ALL HOPE MUST BE REMOVED FROM ONE'S OPPONENT.

BECAUSE HOPE FUELS PERSEVERANCE IN THE DOWNTRODDEN.

THOSE WHO MUST SEE PAST THEIR DEFICITS IN THE NAME OF A HIGHER PURPOSE.

ALTHOUGH I WAS THEIR LEADER, UNTIL THAT BATTLE IN TRENTON, THIS CONCEPT WAS FOREIGN TO ME.

THE BATTLE BEFORE ME MIRRORS THAT BLOODY TIME. HUMANS, PUNY AND FRAIL, BATTLING IMMORTALS FOR CONTROL OF TERRITORY.

HERE, THIS IS THE ONE THAT GIVES THEM HOPE.

THE ONE HUMANS BELIEVE WILL LEAD THEM TO VICTORY AGAINST THE ODDS.

HE MUST BE ELIMINATED.

WITH PREJUDICE.

DEAREST ABIGAIL, I HAVE TO SAY YOUR DISPOSITION IS QUITE SURPRISING AS WELL AS REGRETTABLE.

THE PAST TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS HAVE BEEN REGRETTABLE FOR ME, JOHN. SO CONSIDER THIS MOMENT ONE OF SHARING.

I ASSUME OUR ENTIRE MARRIAGE MET THIS DEFINITION FOR YOU? WHAT OF OUR CHILDREN? THE WORLD WE BUILT TOGETHER?

I LOVED OUR CHILDREN, BUT THEY AND THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVED IS DEAD. AND NEWSFLASH, JOHN, SO IS OUR MARRIAGE.

I ***LOVE*** YOU, ABIGAIL.

THIS MOMENT SHOULD CLEARLY REAFFIRM THAT I NO LONGER SHARE THAT SENTIMENT.

THIS IS ***MY*** WORLD, JOHN ADAMS!

AND IN MY WORLD, THERE IS NO PLACE FOR HUMAN EMOTION.

ONLY HUMAN ***DEATH.***

ALTHOUGH THIS CONFLICT WAS INEVITABLE, IT IS NO LESS HORRIFIC.

UNTIL THIS MOMENT, MY COMRADES HAVE USED THEIR CURSE IN THE NAME OF LIBERATION. NOW I LOOK AT THEM AND SEE THE ACTIONS OF...

...MONSTERS.

I WONDER... WHEN THIS NIGHT ENDS, AND SHOULD THE UNIVERSE DEEM US WORTHY OF SURVIVAL...

...HOW WILL WE MESH WITH THOSE WE NOW STAND BESIDE?

I'M SO TIRED OF THIS SHIT.

FIGHTING BLOODSUCKERS IN THE STREETS I ONCE SWORE TO PROTECT.

SHOULD HAVE MY DEAD ASS IN A COFFIN OR TRYING TO GET MY KID TO SEE THE LIGHT... BUT NO... I'M OUT HERE ACTING LIKE A GODDAMN FOOL.

ALL 'CAUSE THIS BITCH GOT A BUG UP HER COLONIAL ASS...

MAYBE IT'S TIME TO ANTE UP.

AND PUT THIS THING TO BED...

...ONCE AND FOR ALL!!!

PHILLY DON'T DESERVE THIS SHIT. FOLKS GOT TOO MUCH HEART TO TURN TAIL AND RUN.

GOT THIS BAD FEELING, THOUGH... LIKE THE GAME 'BOUT TO CHANGE UP...

...AND I'MMA BE ON MY OWN.

AIN'T GOING OUT LIKE NO BITCH, THOUGH.

AW, SHIT... MY MAGIC, IT'S GONE.

I CHOSE JOHN ADAMS BECAUSE HE'S A DILETTANTE AT BEST.

HIS DESIRE TO OVERCOME HIS SHORTCOMINGS WOULD BLIND HIM TO THE TRUTH OF WHO HE IS.

JEFFERSON'S A SHOWMAN. HIS CHARISMA WOULD SOFTEN THE HARDEST OF SCOWLS.

NEITHER WAS BUILT FOR LEADING OUR SPECIES TO THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN.

AGAINST THE FOES THAT WILL OPPOSE MY MOVEMENT...

...AND HAVE EQUAL IF NOT MORE POWER.

NO, THIS MOMENT REQUIRES MORE THAN A DEAD PRESIDENT.

MORE THAN JUST AN IDEA CANONIZED OVER TIME TO A SOCIETY DESPERATELY IN NEED OF HEROES.

THIS NEW WORLD NEEDS A FATHER...

WHO BETTER THAN GEORGE WASHINGTON?

WHERE'S SEESAW?

I... I DON'T KNOW.

OH, NO...

I THINK THEY GOT HIM.

THEY GOT SEESAW.

"YOU JUST VOLUNTEERED US TO FIGHT A WAR WHEN WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF WE CAN TRUST THEM?"

THE DECISION

Chapter II

THERE'S COMFORT IN DARKNESS.

THE VAST, ENDLESS SPACE, DISPLACING ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE.

IT IS THE NATURAL STATE OF THE DEAD.

FOR THE UNDEAD, IT IS A MEDITATIVE SLEEP, PROVIDING A RESPITE FROM REALITY.

UNFORTUNATELY, REALITY BECKONS, SO OPEN YOUR EYES, MR. THOMPKINS...

AH, YES... MUCH BETTER. ALLOW ME TO FORMALLY INTRODUCE MYSELF. MY NAME IS GEORGE WASHINGTON, HISTORY REFERS TO ME AS THE "FATHER OF AMERICA."

I WAS NEVER COMFORTABLE WITH THAT MONIKER, REALIZING EARLY ON, THE NATION WE'D CREATED WAS INDEED A FLAWED THING.

SO, WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO COURSE CORRECT MANIFESTED, I LEAPT AT THE OPPORTUNITY.

TO THIS POINT, ***EVERYTHING*** HAS GONE AS PLANNED, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ONE THING...

...YOU.

YOU HAVE INSPIRED QUITE THE RESISTANCE TO MY EFFORTS, MR. THOMPKINS. AS SUCH, MY FIRST THOUGHT WAS TO KILL YOU.

THEN I CONSIDERED THE IMPACT YOU'VE HAD ON CURRENT HAPPENINGS AND THOUGHT... INSTEAD OF ***DESTROYING*** YOU, PERHAPS WE COULD REACH A MEETING OF MINDS.

IS THAT SOMETHING YOU'RE WILLING TO ENTERTAIN?

SEESAW LISTENING.

HOW DO WE KNOW SEESAW ISN'T DEAD?

I SENSE THE ONE OF WHICH YOU SPEAK IS BEING HELD BY POWERFUL FORCES. BEYOND THOSE OF OUR OPPONENTS. BEYOND THOSE OF US ASSEMBLED IN THIS ROOM.

SPEAKING OF THOSE ASSEMBLED, I BELIEVE INTRODUCTIONS ARE IN ORDER?

I AM ZUBIYA-- LEADER OF MY GROUP, WHICH CONSISTS OF COMRADES...

...JABIR.

AFFAN.

AND NAJIH.

RIGHT ON.

HI.

THEY'RE WEREWOLVES.

OH, MY.

I'M JOSE, NICE TO MEET YOU.

THE PLEASURE IS OURS, SISTER.

I AM TITUBA, KEEPER OF ALL THAT IS LEFT OF MY STREGHERIA ROOTS.

SHE'S A WITCH.

WOW. WE'RE JUST A FRANKENSTEIN AWAY FROM *THE MONSTER SQUAD.*

BABE, I DON'T THINK THEY'VE SEEN THAT MOVIE.

JUST TRYING TO MAKE CONVERSATION.

HAD SEESAW NOT RISKED HIMSELF, I'D STILL BE A LOW-DOWN BLOODSUCKER.

AHEM.

NOT THAT THAT'S THE WORST THING.

BEST STOP WHILE YOU'RE AHEAD, SON.

SEESAW'S INSIGHT HELPED ME MAKE PEACE WITH MY NEW... SITUATION. I SEE LIFE BETTER NOW THAN WHEN I WAS ACTUALLY ALIVE.

I CAN'T LEAVE HIM HANGING.

WE ARE NEW TO THIS BATTLE, BUT IF THIS COMRADE IS FIGHTING IN THE NAME OF THE PEOPLE, WE WILL STAND WITH YOU ON HIS BEHALF.

GUESS IT'S TIME FOR SANGSTER AND SON TO PUT ON THEIR DETECTIVE HATS.

ONCE WE'D OVERCOME BRITISH TYRANNY, COMMANDEERING A NEW NATION WAS MY PRIMARY TASK.

I SOON LEARNED THAT THE IDEA OF FREEDOM WOULD BE BUILT ON A PILLAR OF DEBATE...

INITIALLY, I EMBRACED THIS DISCOURSE, AS IT WAS IN STARK CONTRAST TO BRITISH RULE. BUT IN THE BACK OF MY MIND, I WAS TROUBLED.

ARGUMENTS AS TO HOW EACH DECISION SHOULD BE HANDLED BECAME THE FOUNDATION OF OUR WORK.

AMERICA, THIS GRAND EXPERIMENT--INSPIRED BY ANCIENT ROME--WAS IT DOOMED TO PREMATURELY IMPLODE?

I RETURNED TO MY HOME IN MT. VERNON TO CONSIDER THIS.

MY WIFE MARTHA AND I DISCUSSED HOW THIS PATTERN WOULD PLAY OUT OVER TIME, CONCLUDING THAT, INEVITABLY, AMERICA WOULD BECOME A NATION WHERE THE ELITE--THE EDUCATED AND WEALTHY--WOULD INFLUENCE ITS EVOLUTION.

AND IN TIME, AMERICA WOULD DEVOLVE TO A PLACE WHERE THE IDEA OF FREEDOM WOULD BE BUT A PRODUCT ADVERTISED TO THE REST OF AN ENVIOUS WORLD. BUT IN TRUTH, SHE WOULD BE AN OLIGARCHY. WHERE LAWYERS WOULD MOLD AND SHAPE TRUTH LIKE CORRUPT PRIESTS.

AS I MUSED ON WHAT I BELIEVED TO BE A DIRE PROGNOSIS, A RAY OF HOPE ENTERED THE FRAY.

HE INTRODUCED HIMSELF SIMPLY AS "CORSON." AN EMISSARY FROM A FAR-OFF LAND. HE WAS AWARE OF MY CONCERNS, MANY OF WHICH WERE SHARED BY HIM AS WELL.

I WAS COMPLETELY CAPTIVATED BY HIS INSIGHT INTO POLITICS AND THE HISTORY OF OTHER SOCIETIES... ROME, EGYPT, AND OTHERS. IT WAS AS IF HE'D OBSERVED THEIR HAPPENINGS FIRSTHAND.

HE MUSED THAT ONE CAN LOVE, FIND SUCCESS, FAME... BUT IN THE END, THERE WAS THE INEVITABLE.

DEATH.

THIS COLD, BITTER TRUTH WAS THE REASONING BEHIND ALL OF MANKIND'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ILLS. WERE THERE NO DEATH, THE SENSE OF DESPERATION THAT FEEDS GREED, NARCISSISM, AND JEALOUSY WOULD FALL AWAY.

HE INTIMATED THERE WAS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE GRAVE. THAT FOR ONE SUCH AS MYSELF--A SYMBOL OF POLITICAL STRENGTH AND VIRTUE--THERE WAS SOMETHING SUPERIOR TO HUMAN EXISTENCE.

WHEN I INQUIRED AS TO WHAT THAT MIGHT BE, HIS SMILE BETRAYED THE MASK HE WORE. IT WAS IN THAT MOMENT I DISCOVERED THAT CORSON WASN'T A HUMAN BEING.

I URGED HIM TO DROP THE MASK.

CORSON HESITATED, CONCERNED THAT HIS TRUE PERSONA WOULD TERRIFY ME.

BUT HE REVEALED HIMSELF.

AND I WAS NOT AFRAID.

THESE ARE CREATURES OF THE DARK REALM--NOT CURSED AS WE. YOU JUST VOLUNTEERED US TO FIGHT A WAR WHEN WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF WE CAN TRUST THEM?

YOUR NEGATIVITY IS REARING ITS UGLY HEAD, AFFAN.

NEGATIVITY?

SINCE WE ARRIVED IN THIS LAND, THE PATTERN HAS BEEN THE SAME. WE ALIGN OURSELVES WITH THE FORCES OF RIGHT ONLY TO SEE THEM SNUFFED OUT.

THIS IS *NOT* OUR WORLD.

M.O.V.E

OUR WORLD IS IN THE PAST, MY BROTHER. IF NOT AIDING THE SIDE OF RIGHT, WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST WE DO?

SURVIVE.

ZUBIYA IS RIGHT, AFFAN. THIS IS OUR WORLD NOW, ITS DESTINY IS *OUR* DESTINY.

THE OLD WAY WAS BETTER.

THE OLD WAY WAS JUST THAT.

THIS *WAR* WILL NEVER END, ZUBIYA.

PEACE IS *EARNED,* JABIR. WE CANNOT LOOK TO THE EXAMPLE OF SOME AS THE RULE FOR ALL.

HUMANS ARE COMMITTED TO DISCOURSE. EVEN AS THE UNDEAD, THEY'RE STILL FIGHTING AMONGST THEMSELVES. CURSED OR NO, I'D PREFER PEACE IN OUR LIVES.

OUR NEW COMRADES APPEAR TO BE QUALITY FOLK. THE FATHER SPEAKS FROM THE HEART-- AS DOES THE SON AND HIS MATE.

WHAT OF THE ONE WHO WEEPS FOR THE LOVE OF HIS WIFE?

THE ONE THAT ONCE RULED THIS LAND. PRESIDENT...

...JOHN ADAMS.

TELL ME, ABIGAIL, DID YOUR HEART GO PITTER-PAT WHEN YOU SAW YOUR BELOVED HUSBAND CLAWING AT YOUR THROAT?

OH, DEAREST THOMAS, EVER THE PROVOCATEUR.

I WONDER HOW YOUR HEART WILL GO ONCE I CRUSH IT UNDER MY STILETTO?

NO SENSE OF HUMOR AMONGST THIS GODFORSAKEN LOT. I'D GIVE MY LEFT EYE FOR THE SIMPLEST OF RIDDLES.

OH, YEAH? "KNOCK, KNOCK..."

STAND DOWN, BRITTANY.

I AIN'T SCARED OF YOU.

YOU SHOULD BE.

CALM YOURSELF, JUPITER. THE CHILD KNOWS ONLY HER ALLEGIANCE TO HER MISTRESS.

PERHAPS YOU SHOULD FOLLOW IN KIND?

THE WORLD IS YOURS, FIRST LADY ADAMS.

THE SUN WILL BE SETTING SOON. PERHAPS WE SHOULD FOCUS ON THE TASK AT HAND?

INCREDIBLE IDEA, YOUR HIGHNESS.

IT APPEARS JOHN AND HIS MERRY BAND OF DISSENTERS HAVE FOUND SOME POWERFUL ALLIES.

"WE NEED TO FIND A WAY TO NEUTRALIZE THAT POWER."

ANY IDEAS?

ONE.

WHICH REQUIRES A TRIP TO THE DARK REALM.

BROUGHT YOUR DINNER. YOU'RE MISSING THE FESTIVITIES, JOHN. IT'S LIKE AN OLD-TIME HALLOWEEN PARTY IN THERE.

HOW'S THINGS HERE IN THE DARK?

"I'D NEVER FELT HAPPIER IN MY LIFE.

"OR MORE IN LOVE."

LOVE CAN BE A TRICKY THING. WONDER SOMETIMES HOW MY WIFE HUNG IN AS LONG AS SHE DID WHEN I WAS ACTING LIKE AN ASS.

I REMEMBER WHEN JOHN QUINCY WAS BORN.

IT'S TOUGH FOR ME TO SPEAK FOR SOMEONE WHO JUST TRIED TO KILL ME-- AND THE ENTIRE CITY FOR THAT MATTER-- BUT MAYBE ABIGAIL LOOKS TO YOU AS A SYMBOL OF HER OPPRESSION?

BUT WHY? I *LOVE* HER.

I LOOK IN MY SON'S EYES AND SEE THE PAIN I'VE CAUSED HIM. HE'S FORGIVEN ME, BUT THAT HURT HAUNTS MY NIGHTMARES.

WORLD Y'ALL CAME UP OUT OF WAS TOUGH FOR WOMEN. TOUGH FOR EVERYBODY THAT WASN'T... LIKE YOU. THAT PAST ISN'T A SIMPLE THING TO SHAKE. ESPECIALLY AFTER YOU GET A TASTE OF POWER.

SO, YOU'RE SAYING I SHOULD ASK ABIGAIL TO FORGIVE ME FOR THE WORLD SHE WAS BORN INTO?

UM... NO. SHE'D RIP OFF YOUR HEAD.

YOUR ONLY HOPE IS THAT AT SOME POINT, ABIGAIL'S LOVE NEUTERS HER RAGE. BUT THAT'S ON HER TO DECIDE. UNTIL THEN, ALL YOU CAN DO IS...

...HOPE FOR THE BEST.

CORSON PROPHESIED A FUTURE AMERICA WHERE THE PEOPLE, HAVING NO VOICE...

...WOULD LOSE THEIR MINDS.

UNTHINKABLE ATROCITIES WOULD REPLACE CIVIL DISCOURSE...

POLICE

POLICE

I CAN'T BREATHE

...AS THOSE SEEKING EMPATHY FROM THEIR NEIGHBORS, WHOSE COLD HEARTS WERE UNABLE TO RECEIVE THEIR SORROW, FELL INTO DESPAIR.

50%

AND GAVE INTO THEIR LOWER SELVES.

TO THIS HE HAD A SOLUTION, BUT IT REQUIRED THAT I TURN AWAY FROM GOD--FOR THE GREATER GOOD.

I SURMISED THAT WERE I IMMORTAL, RECKONING TO A DEITY WOULD NEVER COME.

SO, I CONTINUED TO LISTEN-- BUT DEEP DOWN, I'D ALREADY AGREED TO WORK WITH CORSON.

YOU'VE EXPERIENCED THIS SOCIETY IN A WAY I CANNOT RELATE TO.

"FELT THE DESPAIR THAT COURSES THROUGH ITS STREETS.

"MARINATED IN INJUSTICE.

"SEEN THE TEARS FLOW FROM THE EYES OF THE DISAPPOINTED.

"WHEN JOHN CAME TO YOU, I'M SURE YOU FELT THAT HE WAS OFFERING YOU FREEDOM."

WHEN, IN ACTUALITY, HE WAS OFFERING ANOTHER VERSION OF THE SAME DAMNED SYSTEM.

I AM OFFERING TRUE FREEDOM, MR. THOMPKINS.

A NATION OF FREE IMMORTALS WHO LIVE OUT THEIR LIVES AS THEY SO CHOOSE.

WE WILL NOT SHARE THIS GIFT WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD. IT WILL BE ONLY FOR AMERICANS THAT CHOOSE THIS PATH.

THE QUESTION NOW IS IF THAT'S THE TYPE OF SOCIETY YOU CAN ADVOCATE FOR?

I COULD INVESTIGATE DURING THE DAY... BRING THE FINDINGS BACK TO YOU, POP.

THE DAY IS SAFER FROM THE BLOODSUCKERS, BUT THE STREETS OF PHILLY WEREN'T A CHILD'S PLAYGROUND BEFORE ALL THIS, SO I'M SURE A QUARANTINE WITH NO LAW ENFORCEMENT HASN'T MADE IT ANY BETTER.

HERE COMES THE VOICE OF DISSENT.

NOT THIS TIME.

UNFORTUNATELY, YOU AND I ARE THE ONLY HUMANS IN THIS HOUSE, I'M EATING FOR TWO, AND WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF FOOD.

THEN I'LL GO GET US FOOD.

YOU'RE NOT IN THIS BY YOURSELF, SON.

WE CAN PROVIDE SECURITY AND ASSIST IN THE ACQUISITION OF WHAT IS NEEDED.

THANK YOU.

THE BOTH OF YOU DON'T HAVE YOUR ASSES HOME BY THE TIME THE STREETLIGHTS COME ON, I'M TAKING OFF MY BELT.

FOLLOW ME.

ONE INDIVIDUAL CANNOT ENSURE THE FREEDOM OF AN ENTIRE NATION. THE POSSIBILITY FOR EGO TO OVERCOME ONE'S BETTER SELF IS TOO GREAT.

SO I CREATED A GROUP OF ADVISORS TO AID IN THE GUIDING OF OUR COUNTRY.

MR. THOMPKINS, MEET THE ILLUMINATI.

THIS IS BAD, EVEN FOR PHILADELPHIA.

IT APPEARS YOUR WORLD HAS GIVEN UP ON THE IDEA OF CIVILIZATION.

THE RAVAGES OF WAR ARE PROFOUND.

NOT COMPLETELY, AFFAN.

"MORE LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD HAS LEFT US TO FEND FOR OURSELVES."

WHICH IS WHAT MANY SEEM TO HAVE DONE.

GIVE UP Y'ALL'S SHIT.

OR ELSE WHAT?

LET'S GO GET YOUR SUPPLIES.

GOOD IDEA.

IT'S SO CALM OUT HERE IT'S SCARY.

THAT WON'T BE THE CASE WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN.

I HOPE SOME MADE IT OUT ALIVE.

BEST TO FOCUS ON THE TASK AT HAND, NO?

YOU'RE RIGHT.

WHOEVER TOOK SEESAW COULDN'T HAVE MADE IT FAR. IF THEY WERE OUT HERE IN THE THICK OF IT, THEY MUST'VE BEEN VAMPIRES AS WELL.

OR OF SOME SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN.

DO NOT ALLOW THE SUN TO MAKE YOU OVERCONFIDENT. THE UNDEAD CAN OPERATE IN THE SHADOWS.

WHICH IT LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO VENTURE INTO IF WE'RE GOING TO FIND SEESAW.

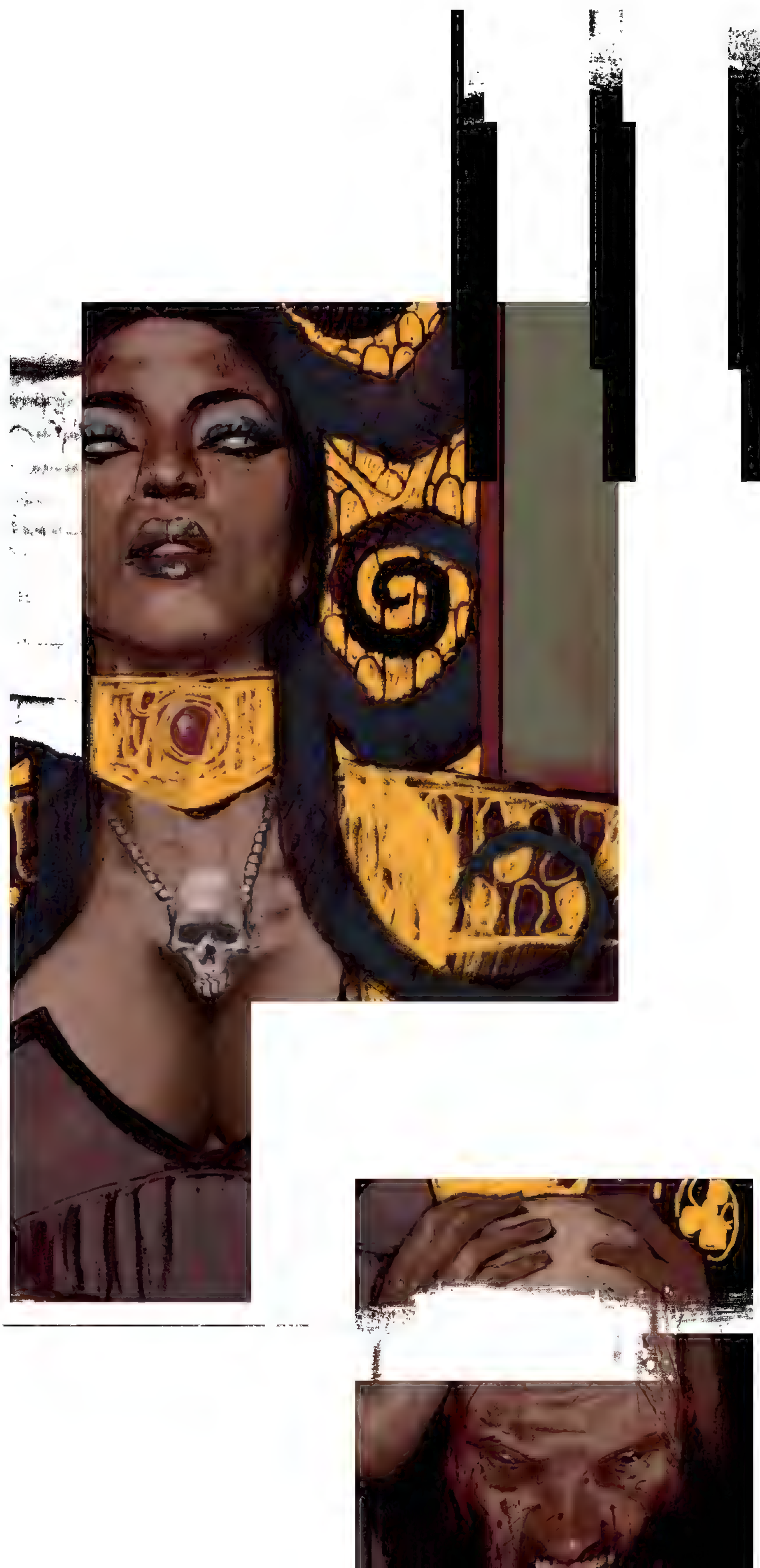
I'LL TREAD LIGHTLY.

THAT'S ALL I ASK.

"...I THINK IT'S TIME TO ACCEPT THAT THE CITY OF BROTHERLY LOVE IS LONG GONE."

THE TRUTH

Chapter III



I'VE BEEN LIED TO MY ENTIRE LIFE.

BELIEVED THEM SHITS WITH ALL MY HEART AND SOUL.

PEOPLE I LOVED BASED THEIR ENTIRE LIVES ON BULLSHIT LIKE THEY HEARD IT COME OUT OF THE GOOD LORD'S MOUTH DIRECTLY.

LIES THAT BROUGHT DEATH, KILLED DREAMS, AND DESTROYED FAMILIES OF FOLK THAT JUST WANTED FREEDOM...

IT'S FUCKED UP.

I WAS TOLD POLICE IS THERE TO PROTECT AND SERVE.

THAT THE AMERICAN DREAM WAS FOR E'RBODY...

THAT BROTHER LOVED BROTHERS...

THAT FAITH IS THE KEY TO SALVATION...

...THAT GOD LOVES US.

AS A CHILD, I WAS GIFTED A HATCHET.

"AS CHILDREN DO, I WENT ABOUT CHOPPING ALL AND ANYTHING WITHIN EYESHOT. ONE SUCH THING WAS MY FATHER'S PRIZED CHERRY TREE.

"WHEN CONFRONTED BY MY FATHER WHO SOUGHT TO FIND THE CULPRIT THAT KILLED HIS PRIZE TREE, I TOLD THE TRUTH."

IN THE SPIRIT OF THAT GESTURE, ALLOW ME TO MAKE AN INTRODUCTION.

I AM AELIO, THE KEEPER OF KNOWLEDGE. DO YOU WISH TO KNOW THE TRUTH OF HOW THIS WORLD CAME TO BE?

HELL YEAH.

IT APPEARS THAT VANDALS HAVE PILLAGED THIS ESTABLISHMENT.

CAN'T GET ANYTHING BY YOU, *HUH?*

YEAH, THEY PRETTY MUCH PICKED IT TO THE BONE.

THIS ACTION REEKS OF DESPERATION.

A LOT OF FOLKS NEEDED HELP BEFORE THE NATIONAL GUARD CUT PHILADELPHIA OFF FROM THE WORLD.

NOW THEY'RE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET WHAT THEY NEED. I'M ABOUT TO DO THE SAME.

GO WITH HER.

I'LL BE QUICK.

I TAKE IT WHERE YOU COME FROM, FOLKS ARE MORE *CIVIL?*

IN OUR TIME, THERE WAS HONOR. WE CONQUERED MANY LANDS, BUT WE NEVER DROVE OUR OPPONENT INTO DESPAIR.

WATCH A COUPLE NIGHTS OF CABLE NEWS AND YOU'LL GET A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF HOW OUR WORLD DIFFERS FROM YOURS.

THERE ARE NO PROVISIONS IN THIS PLACE. WHY ARE WE HERE?

THERE'S NO FOOD, TRUE, BUT WHEN YOU'RE PREGNANT...

...AT LEAST IN TODAY'S WORLD--YOU NEED PRENATAL VITAMINS.

THAT AND THE HARDER STUFF PHARMACISTS LOCK AWAY. BUT AS A FORMER PHARMACIST, I KNOW ALL THE SECRETS.

THAT'S GOOD TO KNOW...

...'CAUSE WE WANT *EVERYTHING.*

"THERE ARE THINGS THAT EXIST BEYOND THAT ESPOUSED IN YOUR HISTORY AND SCIENCE BOOKS.

"SPECIFICALLY, THOSE THAT SPEAK OF MEN RULING THE EARTH.

"PERHAPS IT'S BECAUSE YOUR ARCHEOLOGISTS HAVE NO BONES TO STUDY...

"...NOR PRIMITIVE ARTIFACTS WITH WHICH TO SOLVE EARTH'S GREATEST SECRET.

"MAN IS NOT THIS WORLD'S SUPERIOR BEING.

"BUT RATHER WE, THE ***ETERNA,*** ARE THE RIGHTFUL RULERS OF THIS PLANET."

"MAN WAS BUT ANOTHER CREATURE.

"SIMPLY OUR FOOD SOURCE THAT WE GREATLY UNDERESTIMATED.

"THE IRONY IS THAT THE THING WE SAW AS OF LITTLE TO NO RELEVANCE...

"...WAS TO BE THE KEY TO OUR RESURRECTION.

"AND THE CATALYST TO ITS OWN DEMISE."

"IN THE TIME WE ROAMED FREELY UPON THE EARTH... WE ACTUALIZED OUR POTENTIAL.

"AND DID SO WITHOUT SPOILING THE GLORIOUS WORLD WE CALLED HOME.

"WE WORSHIPED NATURE, SHOUTED PRAISE AT THE WINDS AND SEA...

"...UNTIL THE VERY THING THAT SUPPORTED LIFE DECIDED TO ALTER THAT RELATIONSHIP."

I'M PREGNANT... JUST NEEDED VITAMINS.

AND YOU CAN GET 'EM, LONG AS WE GET WHAT WE KNOW IS IN THERE WITH 'EM.

WATCH YOUR TONE, BOY.

OR WHAT YOU GONNA DO?

NO.

DON'T WANT TO HURT NOBODY, BUT IF THAT'S WHAT WE GOTTA DO, WE WILL.

HERE. TAKE THEM, WE'LL GO.

NO. YOU'RE GONNA GET US OUR SHIT. THEN, ***MAYBE*** YOU CAN GO.

OKAY.

JUST LET ME FIND THE RIGHT KEYS...

KREEAK

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

BADA BADA BADA BADA BADA BADA

NO!!

SHUKK

YOU KNOW YOU DONE FUCKED UP, RIGHT?

"AS MAN WAS EVOLVING, THE RAYS OF THE SUN BECAME OUR ENEMY.

"THREE QUARTERS OF OUR POPULATION WERE DESTROYED.

"WE WHO RULED RESPONSIBLY WERE DRIVEN INTO THE SHADOWS.

"I'VE NEVER FELT SUCH PAIN.

"THAT SAID, THE STORY OF THE ETERNA HAD NOT MET ITS END.

"WHERE THE SUN HAD BECOME AN ADVERSARY, THE MOON HAD BECOME OUR ALLY."

"WHEN THE ETERNA WENT UNDERGROUND, MAN ROSE TO DOMINION OVER THE PLANET.

"ATROCITIES UNPARALLELED BECAME THE STATUS QUO.

"THESE MEN WHO CONSIDERED THEMSELVES ***CIVILIZED*** WERE DEVOID OF HUMANITY, EMPATHY, AND DECENCY.

"AS SCREAMS ECHOED, TEARS STREAMED AND BLOOD FLOWED."

"ALTHOUGH THE BLOOD OF MAN WAS OUR PRIMARY SUSTENANCE, THE EARTH IS OUR HOME.

"IN THE PURSUIT OF WEALTH, HUMANS BECAME A CANCER TO THEIR ECOSYSTEM.

"DEADENING THE MINDS AND SPIRITS OF THEIR OWN IN THE NAME OF PROFIT...

"DISTORTING THE VERY CREATURES THEY DEPEND ON FOR NOURISHMENT INTO BIZARRE FACSIMILES OF THE ORIGINALS.

"IF MAN WERE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE IN THIS FASHION, THE EARTH AND MANKIND ITSELF WOULD BE NO MORE.

"WE COULD NOT ALLOW THAT TO BE."

HERE, TAKE WHAT YOU WANT.

CAN I GO NOW?

NOT YET.

WHICH ONE OF THESE IS FOR PAIN? LIKE THE REAL BAD KIND?

YOU HAVE TO BE MORE SPECIFIC.

GET ME SOMETHING THAT'S SO STRONG A PERSON CAN FORGET WHO THEY ARE.

THESE SHOULD DO IT.

COME WITH ME.

LOOK, I GOT YOU WHAT YOU WANTED.

IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN CALL THE COPS OR ANYTHING...

PLEASE... AGAIN, I'M PREGNANT.

CRACK IT OPEN.

THESE MY PEOPLE. WAS GETTING TREATMENTS 'TIL THEM BLOOD-SUCKERS TOOK OVER THE STREETS AND EVERYTHING SHUT DOWN.

AIN'T THINKING YOU CAN KEEP 'EM ALIVE, BUT IF YOU CAN TAKE THE PAIN AWAY... FIGURED THAT'D MAKE IT A LITTLE EASIER.

WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME YOU HAD PEOPLE THAT NEEDED HELP?

THAT LOOK IN YOUR EYE WHEN YOU FIRST SAW US... WASN'T THE SORT THAT LOOKS TO HELP.

I'M A LOT MORE EMPATHETIC WHEN THERE'S NOT A GUN IN MY FACE.

THE SHIT I SEEN OVER THESE LAST MONTHS... BLOODSUCKERS TAKING KIDS, CREWS WILDING...

WASN'T FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD SHOOTING EVERYTHING THAT TRY TO GET OUT THE CITY, I'D BEEN LONG GONE.

WE'VE BEEN HOLED UP IN THE HOUSE FOR WEEKS. WASN'T FOR RUNNING OUT OF FOOD, I'D STILL BE THERE.

I FEEL YOU.

USED TO BE CRAZY JUST AT NIGHT.

NOW IT'S BANANAS TWENTY-FOUR/ SEVEN.

I'D BETTER GET GOING.

SORRY 'BOUT TAKING OUT YOUR PEOPLE. WE CAN GET YOU BACK TO YOUR SPOT.

YOU KNOW...

"I LOVE PHILADELPHIA...

Pop

Pop

"...BUT I THINK IT'S TIME TO ACCEPT THAT THE CITY OF BROTHERLY LOVE IS LONG GONE.

"IT'S EVERY PERSON FOR THEMSELVES...

"...SO I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, BUT..."

...I THINK I'LL BE ALRIGHT.

NO.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELVES.

YOU AIN'T GONNA GET THEM VITAMINS?

I'M GOOD WITH MY HANDS.

TAKE IT EASY.

YOU TOO.

"WE WATCHED AS THE WESTERN WORLD EVOLVED.

"THIS TINY NATION THWARTING BRITISH RULE.

"THAT MADE US REALIZE IT WAS TIME TO MOVE OUT OF THE SHADOWS.

"WE CONFRONTED THE FATHER OF THIS NATION AND MADE HIM AN OFFER HE COULD NOT REFUSE.

"WE WOULD CREATE A HYBRID CREATURE. ONE WHO WOULD SHARE OUR IMMORTALITY AND THIRST FOR BLOOD. BUT THE TENETS OF HUMANITY WOULD REMAIN.

"TOGETHER, WE DEVISED A STRATEGY FOR OVERTHROWING THE WORLD AS IT IS, TO ONE WHERE BOTH MAN AND THE THING YOU CALL 'VAMPIRE' COULD COEXIST.

"THAT MEANT BUILDING A COALITION OF FOLK THAT HAD ONLY PIECES OF OUR VISION."

"THOSE WHO WOULD REPOPULATE THIS NEW CREATURE WHILE CARRYING THE BURDENS OF THEIR FORMER HUMAN GUISES."

YOU BROKE AWAY FROM THE PLAN. SAW PAST YOUR FORMER LIFE TO EMBRACE THE POSSIBILITY OF WHAT COULD BE.

I APPRECIATE ALL THAT, BUT I GOT ONE QUESTION.

WHAT'S SO SPECIAL 'BOUT RIGHT NOW?

WE ARE CREATURES OF THE DARK. THE LIGHT, IN RESPONSE TO OUR ACTIONS, HAS FORTIFIED AN INDIVIDUAL WITH POWER TO THWART OUR GOALS.

HE IS WHAT HUMANS REFER TO AS A VAMPIRE HUNTER. IN HISTORY, HE DEFEATED MANY WHO SOUGHT TO TAKE CONTROL OF HIS NATION.

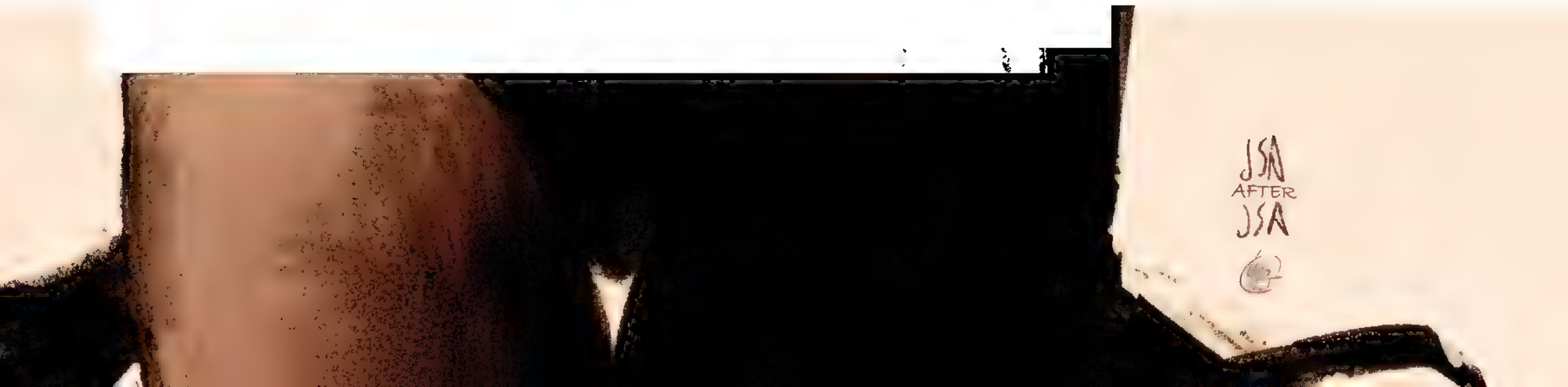
WHO 'DIS?

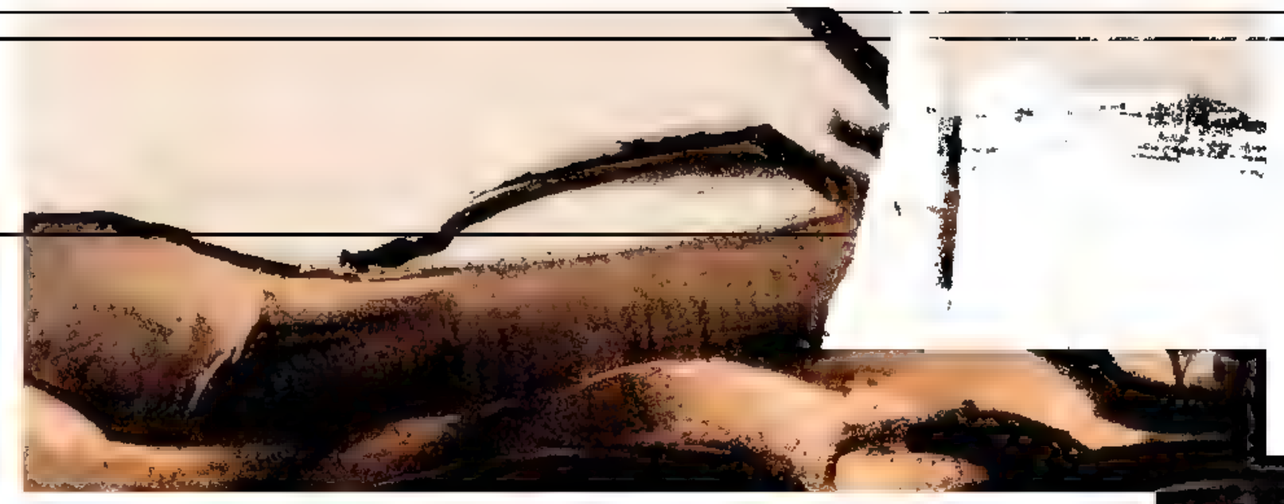
"TOUSSAINT LOUVERTURE."

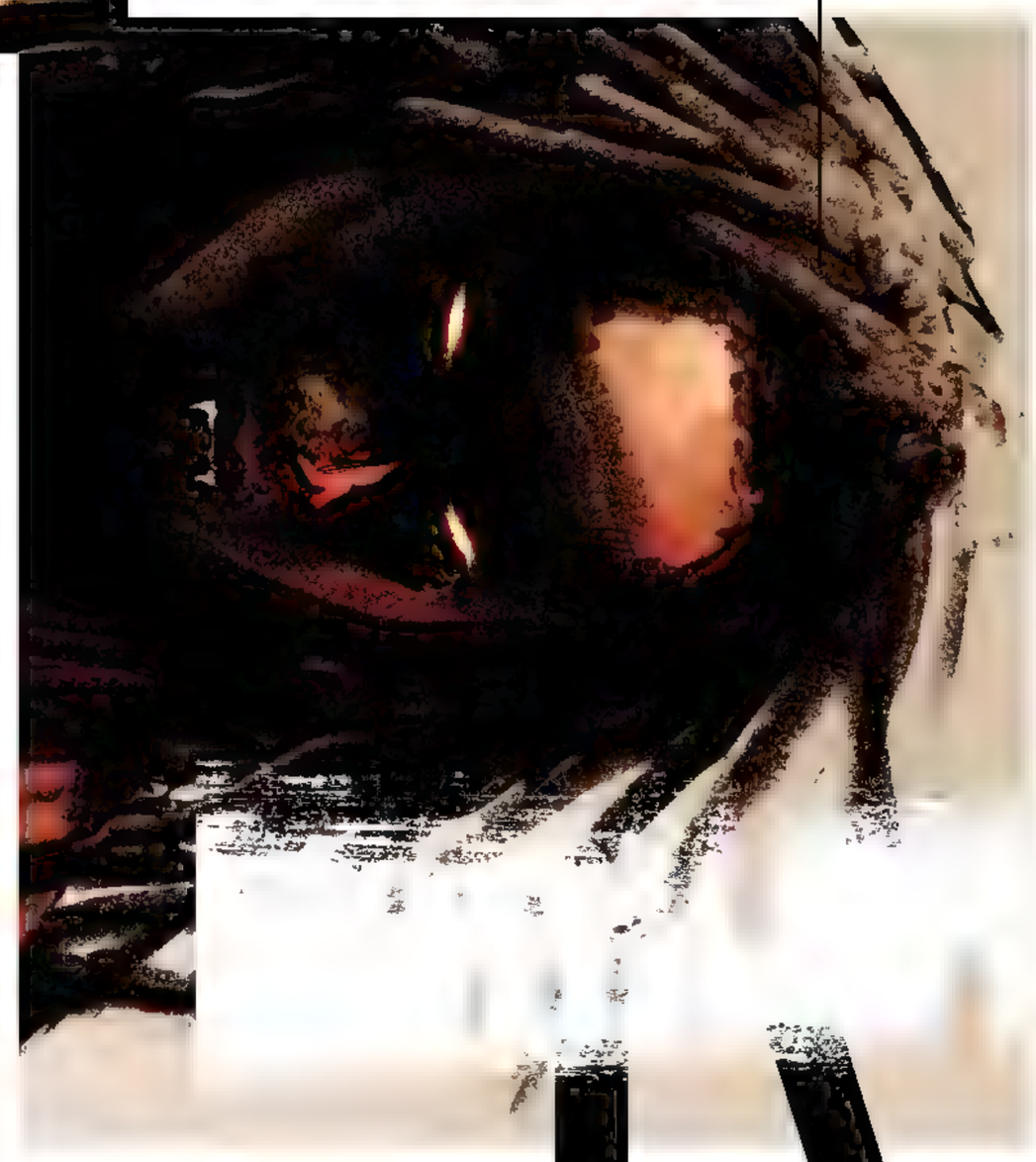
"HE BEGAN DESTROYING OUR KIND WITHOUT MERCY."

THE CONVERSATION

Chapter IV







IV

LYCANS?! THEY HAVE *LYCANS?!*

HOW THE HELL CAN WE DEFEAT LYCANS?!

THEY WERE RIPPING OFF HEADS!

HEY, HOW ABOUT WE START OUR QUEST FOR WORLD DOMINATION IN ANOTHER STATE... LIKE DELAWARE?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

YOU'RE EMBARRASSING YOURSELF, THOMAS.

FINE! I'M AFRAID! AM I ALONE IN THAT SENTIMENT?! THEY WERE RIPPING HEADS OFF, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!

PANIC SOLVES NOTHING.

"PANIC" IS A STRONG WORD. I PREFER THE WORD...

KNOCK KNOCK

...CONCERNED.

WHO COULD IT BE?

ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.

ANSWER THE DOOR, THOMAS.

WHY ME?

ASK ONCE MORE, AND THE FINALITY OF MY RESPONSE WILL FUEL YOUR NIGHTMARES.

FINE. SO DAMN TEMPERAMENTAL...

→GASP← IT CAN'T BE...

YOU'RE...

GEORGE WASHINGTON! GEORGE? REALLY? IT'S YOU...

HELLO, THOMAS.

GEORGE WASHINGTON? WHEN... HOW?

KILL THEM.

I ASSUME YOU AREN'T PLEASED TO SEE ME, ABIGAIL?

TRADITION REQUIRES THOSE SUCH AS YOU TO BE INVITED INTO ONE'S HOME.

YOU! TRAITOR!

NO TIME FOR YOUR SHIT TONIGHT, TOPS.

Y'ALL BEST NOT FUCK WITH OL' BOY. HE AIN'T NO ORDINARY CAT.

NO, BRITTANY.

I'LL BE BRIEF. THE EXISTENCE OF OUR KIND IS IN JEOPARDY. YOUR PLANS, WHATEVER THEY MAY BE, ARE SECONDARY TO THIS TRUTH.

I BELIEVE YOU KNOW TEVIN.

'SUP, ABBY.

SEESAW. YOU'RE LOOKING WELL.

THIS IS AELIO.

PLEASURE TO MEET YOU, MRS. ADAMS.

MY NAME IS *ABIGAIL.*

PARDON MY SURPRISE, GEORGE. I JUST DIDN'T EXPECT TO...

SHUT UP, THOMAS.

YOUR CHOICES ARE AS FOLLOWS... LISTEN TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY, OR I WILL DESTROY YOU AND YOUR ENTIRE LOT.

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, GEORGE.

YOU WEAR THE FUTURE WELL, DEAREST ABIGAIL.

BLOOD.

TEN TO ONE IT'S SEESAW'S.

HOW CAN YOU BE CERTAIN?

HOLDOVER FROM MY LEECH PERIOD. ONCE I SMELL YOUR BLOOD, IT'S SET TO MEMORY.

THE SPLATTER LEADS THAT WAY. ALTHOUGH IF WE GO DOWN THAT ALLEY, WE MAY NOT COME OUT ALIVE.

I CAN CREATE AN AURA THAT MIMICS THE POWER OF THE LIGHT REALM.

IT WILL REPEL THE DARK REALM'S VERMIN.

I SURE HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT.

I'M CURIOUS, HOW EXACTLY DOES ONE BECOME A WITCH?

I DOUBT YOU'D COMPREHEND MY JOURNEY.

A YEAR AGO, YOU'D BE RIGHT. AFTER THE SHIT I'VE SEEN OF LATE? AIN'T MUCH I WOULDN'T BELIEVE.

I CARRY ALL THAT IS LEFT OF MY KIND, OUR POWER, METHODS, HISTORY...

WHEN I DIE, THERE WILL BE NO MORE.

NO MORE.

THAT'S A LOT OF PRESSURE.

"THE ONES YOU ALL CALL 'WEREWOLVES' WERE ONCE MOORS WHO CONQUERED MY SICILIAN HOMELAND HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO.

"DURING THE BATTLE, OUR QUEEN, A MASTER WITCH, CURSED THE QUARTET BEFORE THEY REMOVED HER HEAD FROM ITS FLESHLY HOME.

"AS WAS THE WAY OF THAT TIME, THE MEN SOUGHT TO LEAVE THEIR SEED IN THE LAND THEY'D OVERCOME.

"ALTHOUGH ARMED WITH THE POWER OF STREGHERIA WITCHCRAFT, THE WOMEN LACKED THE COLLECTIVE POWER TO DEFEAT THE BARBARIANS. AS SUCH...

"...SUBMISSION WAS THE LOGICAL COURSE OF ACTION."

"THE SPOILS OF VICTORY WERE SAVORED THAT NIGHT.

"THEIR LUSTS SATISFIED, THE MOORS LEFT TO CONQUER OTHER LANDS.

"WE SET ABOUT TO REBUILD OUR WORLD.

"ALTHOUGH THE CIRCUMSTANCES WEREN'T IDEAL...

"MY MOTHER WELCOMED ME INTO THE WORLD WITH LOVE.

"WE WERE ALL WE HAD. BUT THAT WAS MORE THAN ENOUGH."

AT LEAST FOR A WHILE.

AS YOU ARE AWARE, THE LIGHT REALM PREFERS NOT TO GET INTO THE AFFAIRS OF MORTALS.

I ASSUME THEY'VE MADE AN EXCEPTION?

IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING.

"BY ORDER OF THE MOST HIGH, GENERAL TOUSSAINT--FAMOUS BY HIS EXPLOITS DURING THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION--WAS RESURRECTED, ALONG WITH HIS FIERCEST OFFICERS, IN THE NAME OF BALANCING THE SCALES OF THIS CONFLICT."

HE IS BUT ONE WARRIOR. SURELY OUR COMBINED FORCES CAN OVERCOME ONE MAN.

HE IS MORE THAN A MAN.

"AS OUR KIND MADE THEIR WAY BACK TO PROMINENCE, THE LIGHT REALM DECIDED TO TAKE ACTION.

"UNDERSTANDING THAT HUMANS, INFERIOR TO US IN EVERY WAY, WOULD IN SHORT ORDER BE NO MORE...

"...THE LIGHT REALM SOUGHT OUT A CHAMPION... ONE CAPABLE OF WAGING WAR WITH THE UNDEAD...

"TOUSSAINT WAS THE CHOSEN ONE.

"INFUSED WITH THE POWER OF LIGHT, HE RETURNED TO THE WORLD OF MEN.

"AND WITH THE CONFIDENCE THAT COMES WITH POWER..."

"HE BEGAN DESTROYING OUR KIND WITHOUT MERCY.

"HE AND HIS HAVE PERFECTED THEIR METHODS.

"SO THE NUMBERS OF OUR KIND IN PHILADELPHIA DO NOT INTIMIDATE HIM.

"HE IS WITHOUT FEAR.

"WITHOUT REMORSE.

"WITHOUT CONSCIENCE.

"SIMPLY STATED, TOUSSAINT ENJOYS HIS WORK.

"AND HE SHOULD BE TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY."

"WE CANNOT ALLOW OUR BLOODLUST TO BLIND US TO THIS THREAT.

"THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME OUR KIND HAS FACED EXTINCTION.

"WE ARE NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO WAGE ANOTHER BATTLE.

"WE MUST STAND TOGETHER.

"THERE ARE NO OTHER OPTIONS.

"THUS THE POINT OF THIS CONVERSATION."

TOUSSAINT'S BEEN PRACTICING FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS FOR THIS MOMENT.

HE AND HIS KIND ARE RIDING HERE WITH THE INTENTION OF DESTROYING US ALL.

I HAVE ONE QUESTION...

...WHERE DID *YOU* COME FROM?

I'VE BEEN ON THIS WORLD SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME AND I INTEND TO BE HERE UNTIL ITS END.

I LIKE THE WAY YOU THINK.

ALL PATHS LEAD TO THIS END.

OF COURSE, THEY WOULDN'T MAKE IT EASY.

STAND BACK...

SAVE YOUR STRENGTH. WE MAY NEED IT TO GET HOME.

BAM

I SUGGEST YOU PROCEED WITH CAUTION.

AIN'T GOTTA TELL ME TWICE.

THERE'S THE BLOOD TRAIL. WE MAY BE CLOSE.

IF SEESAW WAS HERE, HE'S GONE NOW.

THAT HAPPENS TO BE THE CASE.

PERHAPS HE MET HIS END.

SEESAW'S A SURVIVOR. HE'S OUT THERE SOMEWHERE.

WE SHOULD GET BACK, FIGURE OUT A NEW PLAN OF ACTION.

I AGREE.

UNFORTUNATELY, WE'RE ALONE IN OUR SENTIMENT.

DON'T SEE A WAY OUT OF THIS...

I GOT A KID COMING.

YOU WILL SEE YOUR CHILD.

STAND BACK.

UH... COULD YOU DO THIS AGAIN?

LIKE ALL OVER PHILLY?

I'VE EXHAUSTED MY ABILITIES FOR A SPELL.

I REQUIRE REST.

GOT IT.

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.

STREETS ARE KINDA CALM... STRANGE.

THANK THE LORD FOR ALL BLESSINGS.

YEAH, GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.

HEY, BABE.

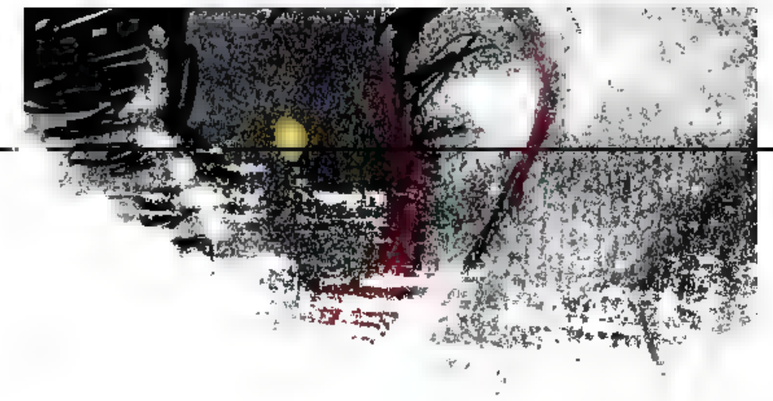
HEY... WHAT'S UP?

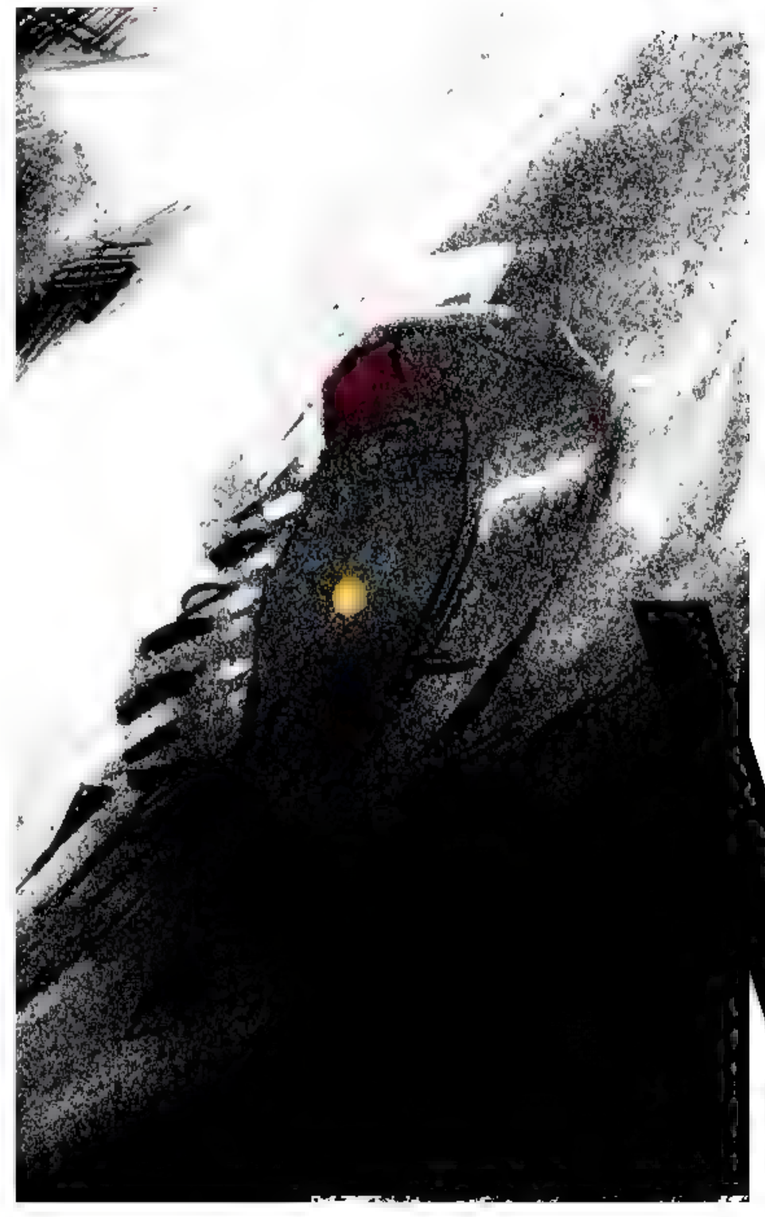
WE HAVE COMPANY.

"YOUR EYES DECEIVED YOU, JOHN."

TWELVE ANGRY VAMPIRES...
FOUR WEREWOLVES...
OH, AND A WITCH.

Chapter V





YOU USED ME.

"USED" SOUNDS SO HARSH.

I PREFER THE TERM "DEPLOYED."

THOMAS AND YOURSELF HAVE ATTRIBUTES THAT COMPLEMENT ONE ANOTHER. I CHOSE TO SET YOU GENTLEMEN ON A PATH THAT LED YOU TO THIS MOMENT.

MY ACTIONS MAY HAVE DUPLICITOUS ELEMENTS, BUT HERE WE ARE, HUNDREDS OF YEARS FROM WHENCE WE CAME TO BE.

JOHN'S THE MAD ONE, NOT ME.

FOR OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS, I BELIEVED I WAS THE ONLY ONE OF OUR LOT TO WALK THE EARTH. NOW I FIND OUT THAT NOT ONLY ARE YOU HERE, BUT THOMAS AS WELL.

IF IT MATTERS, JOHN, YOU'VE NEVER LOOKED BETTER-- THE WEIGHT LOSS, TAILORED JACKET... TOP NOTCH.

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON'S ACTIONS WERE IN CONCERT WITH OUR WISHES, PRESIDENT ADAMS.

CALL ME "JOHN."

WE, THE ETERNA, HAVE BEEN PREPARING FOR WAR FOR A THOUSAND YEARS. WHEN OUR KIND WAS DRAWN INTO DARKNESS, A PLAN OF ACTION WAS REQUIRED TO FACE A MODERN WORLD.

AN ARMY WAS NEEDED TO WAGE WAR AGAINST THE FORCES THAT THREATEN TO ELIMINATE OUR KIND.

SO, I CHOSE YOU AND THOMAS TO BUILD SAID ARMY. AN ARMY WE NOW HAVE. AND ALONG WITH AELIO, WE SHALL LEAD OUR FORCES TO VICTORY OVER MANKIND.

IN OUR TIME, I TRUSTED YOU ABOVE ALL OTHERS. GEORGE WASHINGTON WAS INCAPABLE OF LYING IN MY EYES.

YOUR EYES DECEIVED YOU, JOHN.

WHEN IT COMES TO PROTECTING OUR KIND--OUR NATION--I WOULD DO ***ANYTHING***. WHICH BRINGS ME TO THIS MOMENT.

MY HOPE THIS NIGHT IS THAT WE, THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THIS NATION, WILL PUT ANY DIFFERENCES ASIDE AND FACE THE THREAT TO COME.

AND IF WE DON'T?

I WILL DESTROY EVERYONE UNDER THIS ROOF.

WHICH INCLUDES YOU.

WELL, I'M SURE WE CAN ALL COME TO A FRIENDLY AGREEMENT. HELL, WE DID IT BEFORE. GETTING FRANKLIN AND MADISON ON THE SAME PAGE WAS NO SIMPLE FEAT. AND REMEMBER LIVINGSTON'S FLATULENCE--MY GOD, I THOUGHT SOMETHING DIED--

PLEASE SHUT UP, THOMAS.

I SENSE YOU DON'T SHARE THOMAS' OPTIMISM.

THERE ARE MANY WOUNDS TO BE HEALED BEFORE ANY DISCUSSION OF GOING FORWARD.

GUESS WE'LL JUST HAVE TO SEE HOW THE NIGHT UNFOLDS.

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA.

THEY SAY HAITIANS DON'T FEAR DEATH.

I'VE FOUND THAT TO BE TRUE.

IN LIFE, WE FACED GREATER ODDS THAN THE ONES THAT LAY BEFORE US.

NAPOLEON WAS DETERMINED TO NEVER SEE A BLACK REPUBLIC.

HIS DISAPPOINTMENT GREATLY PLEASED ME.

HUMANKIND NOW FACES AN ATTACK FROM THE DARK REALM.

WHEREAS ONCE WE FOUGHT FOR HAITIAN LIBERATION...

...NOW, WE FIGHT FOR THE ENTIRE WORLD.

IF THE SCALES OF LIGHT ARE TIPPED TO THE SHADE OF DARKNESS, MANKIND WILL FACE PAIN GREATER THAN THAT OF A THOUSAND WARS.

MY RESURRECTION WAS TO ENSURE THAT SUCH WOULD NEVER BE.

I WILL NOT FAIL.

TO THIS POINT, WE'VE KEPT THE VAMPYRE HORDE TO A NEGLIGIBLE NUMBER.

OR AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT WE BELIEVED.

WITHOUT MY SISTER SANITÉ, WE WOULD NOT HAVE FOUND THIS LEVEL OF SUCCESS.

SHE CARRIES THE SAME PASSION FOR BATTLE NOW AS SHE DID THROUGHOUT THE REVOLUTION.

THAT PASSION WILL BE NEEDED IN THE BATTLES TO COME.

FOR THE DARK REALM'S COMMITMENT IS PROFOUND.

NOT LOOKING TO PLAY "MAKE UP" WITH THE DEAD PRESIDENTS?

LETTING THEM DO THEM.

USED TO DREAM ABOUT HAVING A CORNER OFFICE IN ONE OF THEM HIGH-RISES.

I'D WEAR A SUIT AND TIE LIKE MY GRANDMA WANTED. MAYBE MOVE ME AND HER OUT TO CHESTNUT HILL...

YOU KNOW, LIVE THE GOOD LIFE.

THAT SECOND ONE TO THE LEFT? WHERE MY WIFE GLORIA SIGNED HER FIRST BOOK DEAL.

THAT WAS A GREAT NIGHT.

THINK THOSE LIGHTS WILL EVER COME BACK ON?

MAYBE. ONE DAY WHEN I'M LONG GONE.

ALREADY DEAD.

LET'S GET ON BACK TO THE SHITSHOW.

YEAH...

IF WE RIDE ALL NIGHT, WE SHOULD ARRIVE IN PHILADELPHIA BY MORNING.

WOULDN'T AN AUTOMOBILE BE FASTER?

AFTER THE CURRENT CONFLICTS, IF THE STREETS ARE AS I BELIEVE THEM TO BE, THE HORSES WILL FARE BETTER.

I TRUST YOUR JUDGMENT, TOUSSAINT, BUT SOMETHING FEELS OFF ABOUT ALL OF THIS.

DEAREST SANITÉ, IT WILL BE AS IT ALWAYS IS. DEATH TO THE ABOMINABLE ONES.

PLEASE TELL ME THAT'S NOT WHO I THINK IT IS...

IT IS BUT A SPIDER GENERAL.

OH, HOW I WISH THAT WERE TRUE.

TOUSSAINT! MY BROTHER! WHAT IS ***REALLY*** GOING ON?

WE ARE PREPARING FOR BATTLE, ANANSI.

THERE YOU GO WITH THAT SHIT. IT'S IN THE TONE-- JUST NEGATIVE. YOU ARE NOT GOING TO BRING ME DOWN ON THIS GLORIOUS NIGHT!

WE HAVE NO TIME FOR YOUR RIDDLES, TRICKSTER.

AU CONTRAIRE, MON FRÈRE.

I GOT SOMETHING YOU'LL WANT TO HEAR. SEE, YOU THINK Y'ALL 'BOUT TO ROLL UP IN PHILLY AND START CUTTING OFF HEADS AND SHIT?

LEMME TELL YOU, Y'ALL ABOUT TO WALK INTO SOME OTHER BULLSHIT ALTOGETHER.

NO GAMES, SPIDER GOD. TELL US WHAT YOU KNOW.

WELL, AIN'T THIS A BITCH? I COME TRYING TO HELP YOU AND YOU TALKING TO ME LIKE I OWE YOU MONEY.

I THINK YOU SHOULD LISTEN, TOUSSAINT. HE IS A GOD.

IF I HEAR ANYTHING OF NOTE, I WILL.

I'M JUST GOING TO IGNORE Y'ALL TALKING LIKE I'M NOT HERE AND GET DOWN TO IT.

I HAVE IT ON GOOD ACCORD THAT THERE'S A MEETING TAKING PLACE IN PHILLY BETWEEN THREE DEAD PRESIDENTS, 'BOUT FOUR WEREWOLVES, A WITCH, BUNCH'A VAMPIRES, A PREGNANT CUBAN LADY, AND A YOUNG NEGRO MALE WITH ENTITLEMENT ISSUES.

AND THEY TALKING 'BOUT Y'ALL.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, ANANSI?

SO AGAIN, I SAY... THIS AIN'T NO REGULAR SHIT Y'ALL HEADING TO.

WHY ARE WE, WARRIORS, IN A CHILD'S ROOM?

BECAUSE THE OTHER ROOMS ARE OCCUPIED, JABIR.

I TIRE OF THE EXCUSES YOU MAKE FOR THEM, BLOODSUCKER AND HUMAN ALIKE. WERE ONE A CYNIC, THEY'D THINK THEM YOUR COMRADES RATHER THAN US.

YOUR CONCERNS WILL EVENTUALLY LEAD US TO DISSENSION. PERHAPS WE CAN GO OUTSIDE AND I CAN EARN YOUR RESPECT?

SIT, JABIR.

YOU ARE NOT ONE OF US, WITCH. YOUR TONGUE WIELDS NO INFLUENCE OVER MY ACTIONS.

WHAT ABOUT OURS, INSOLENT ONE?

I FEAR NEITHER OF YOU.

PLEASE, ALL OF YOU, SIT.

WE'VE AGREED TO FIGHT ALONGSIDE THE INITIAL GROUP. NOW THE ETERNA AND HIS LOT HAVE CHANGED THE EQUATION.

WHICH IS WHY WE SHOULD LEAVE THIS PLACE.

AND DO WHAT?

RETURN TO THE LIVES WE KNEW. CONQUERING LANDS... PILLAGING... WE ARE WARRIORS!

THE WORLD YOU KNEW IS A THING OF THE PAST, MY BROTHER. TODAY, EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED. ONE BIG SOCIETY.

IF THE DARK REALM WINS, WHEREVER WE MOVE TO WILL BE THREATENED.

WHICH IS WHY WE MUST SETTLE OURSELVES AND THINK CLEARLY.

FINE.

"I'M SURE WHILE YOUR SOUL WAS STROLLING ABOUT THE ELYSIAN FIELDS OF GOLD, YOU THOUGHT YOUR BLACK ASS WAS RETIRED, GENERAL.

"BUT LITTLE DID YOU KNOW THE PAPPY ON HIGH WOULD COME CALLING.

"THEY SAY EACH LIVING THING OWES A DEATH. WELL, IN YOUR CASE, TOUSSAINT, I GUESS YOU GET TO RIDE THE WHITE LIGHT TWICE."

"I KNOW MY STORY, ANANSI. GET ON WITH IT."

"YOU AIN'T GONNA BE TALKING TO ME JUST ANY WHICH WAY. SO... WHILE GABRIEL AND MICHAEL WERE LISTENING TO YOUR DEMANDS IN REGARDS TO RETURNING TO THE WORLD...

"...GIVING YOU BACK YOUR TROOPS AND SHIT...

"...PLUS SOME SPECIALIZED WEAPONS AND DOODADS..."

WHAT THEY DIDN'T TELL YOU WAS THIS AIN'T SOME DARK REALM BUG HUNT... LIKE THEY LET SOME DEMON ROACHES LOOSE AND YOU GOTTA STEP ON 'EM. NO, NO, THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO CORSON.

ONE AND THE SAME.

EVERYTHING YOU SEE IS HIS DOING, AND I'LL BET TWO TO ONE LUCIFER AND THE OTHER TWO DEMON NUTS GONNA REAR THEIR UGLY HEADS ANY MOMENT NOW. SO MAYBE YOU AND YOUR HEAVENLY WU-TANG CLAN MIGHT WANNA HEAD BACK TO THEM NICE BEACHES IN HAITI INSTEAD OF FUCKING AROUND PHILADELPHIA.

THE MASTER DEMON?

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, IT APPEARS THAT ALL IS NOT AS IT SEEMS. WHAT WERE EVEN ODDS ARE POTENTIALLY OVERWHELMING ONES. WE WERE ALL RESURRECTED FOR THE PURPOSE AHEAD--FIGHT IN THE NAME OF SAVING HUMANITY.

I BELIEVE WE CAN STILL DO THAT VERY THING. BUT IT ALSO MEANS THAT SOME OF US MAY RETURN TO THE ELYSIAN FIELDS. WHAT SAY YOU? STAY THE COURSE OR NO?

YAAAA!!

THAT WAS BETTER THAN OBAMA IN HYDE PARK. SHIT, I'M READY TO FIGHT AND I AIN'T EVER IN THIS SHIT.

THANK YOU, ANANSI.

ANYTHING FOR YOU, GENERAL. GOOD LUCK.

CAN'T JUST SEND THESE MUFUCKAS OUT TO THE SLAUGHTER.

GODDAMN, ANANSI, WHY CAN'T YOU JUST FIND A NICE TREE, MIND YOUR BUSINESS, AND SUN?

I CAN KILL SEESAW NOW AND WE CAN LEAVE THIS PLACE.

NO.

WHY ARE WE EVEN HERE? WE DON'T NEED THEM.

'CAUSE OF JEFFERSON'S BITCH ASS.

WATCH YOUR TONGUE, HAT MAN.

GOOD EVENING, ALL. I THINK IT BEST FOR ALL TO LEAVE THE ROOM EXCEPT...

YOU TWO.

GO.

HELLO, JOHN.

HELLO.

I'M NOT SURE WHERE TO BEGIN.

PROBABLY BECAUSE YOU'RE USED TO ME TELLING YOU.

TOUCHÉ! ABIGAIL, I GET THE FEELING YOU HATE ME AND I DON'T KNOW WHY.

ON YOUR FIRST EXTENDED SLEEP, I HAD AN AFFAIR.

IT WAS DELICIOUS.

WITH WHOM?

SALLY HEMMINGS, JEFFERSON'S INDENTURED LOVER.

I DID IT BECAUSE I FELT ***LOVED***. WITH YOU, I FELT ***OWNED***.

I'VE ALWAYS RESPECTED YOU.

IN A WORLD THAT CELEBRATED ***YOU***.

SO, YOU HATED ME BECAUSE OF THE WORLD WE WERE BORN INTO?

YES... IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING.

BECAUSE AS YOU WERE CELEBRATED, I WAS DIMINISHED, AND IT WAS... NORMAL. WHEN I SEE YOU, I FEEL HOW I FELT THEN. I'M FREE NOW AND I WILL ACCEPT NOTHING LESS THAN THAT.

I'M... SORRY. SORRY THAT I DIDN'T SEE HOW YOU FELT OR CHANGE THE WORLD THAT MADE YOU FEEL THAT WAY. I CAN'T CHANGE WHAT WAS, BUT I CAN PROMISE TO NEVER CONTRIBUTE TO ANY FUTURE FEELINGS AS THOSE YOU DESCRIBE. IT'S ALL I HAVE TO GIVE, ABBY.

I FORGIVE YOU.

SO, IF THEY DON'T AGREE, ARE THEY GONNA EAT US?

AIN'T GOING DOWN LIKE THAT. CAN BET YOUR ASS ON THAT.

WISH THEY'D WRAP IT UP SO WE CAN GET IT ON WITH.

WISH I KNEW WHAT EXACTLY IS GOING ON.

WORD 'BOUT TO COME ANY MINUTE NOW.

HOW CAN YOU BE SO SURE?

SUN COMING UP.

JAMES! WE'VE ARRIVED AT A DECISION.

GUESS WE BETTER GET A MOVE ON.

Y'ALL STAY HERE. I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHAT'S UP.

SO... WASSUP?

EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM HAS TRAVELED A DIFFICULT PATH TO ARRIVE AT THIS MOMENT.

YOU'VE BATTLED HUMANKIND AND AT TIMES BATTLED ONE ANOTHER.

BUT THAT'S THE PAST. THIS MOMENT MARKS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW NIGHT. ONE WHERE WE STAND ABOVE ALL.

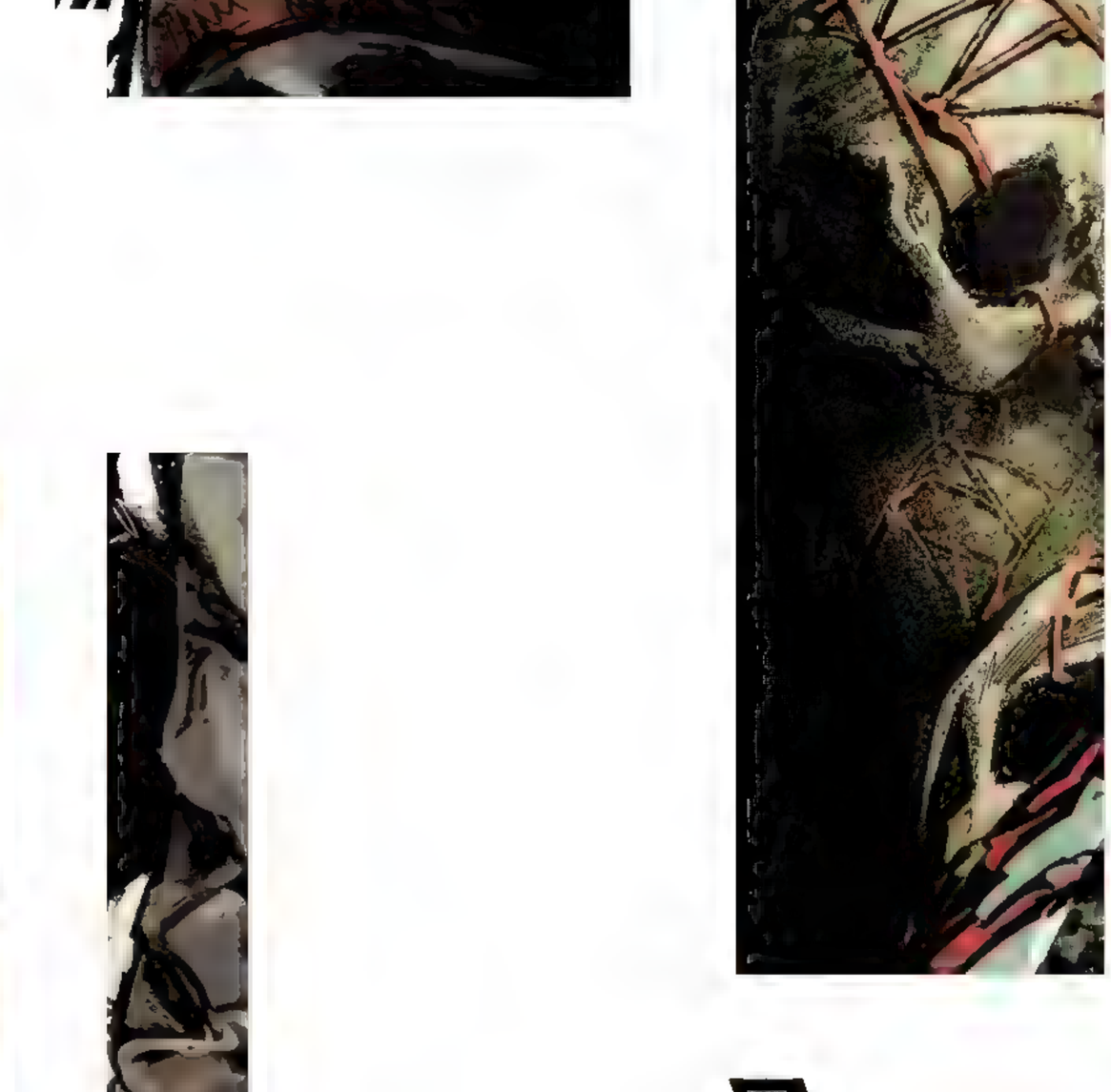
AND IT'S IN THAT SPIRIT WE HAVE AGREED TO COME TOGETHER. IF ANYONE SEES OTHERWISE, SPEAK NOW, OR FOREVER HOLD YOUR PEACE.

GUESS THAT MEANS WE'RE GOING TO WAR.

"THAT'S THE BEGINNING OF THE END."

TIME TO DIE

Chapter VI



VII

THEY KNEW WE WERE COMING.

WHICH MEANS THAT SOMEWHERE ON HIGH, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE AWARE THAT SUPERNATURAL BEINGS EXIST.

BEINGS THAT DEFY WHAT HUMANS BELIEVE LIFE TO BE.

I AND MY BRETHREN ARE RIDING INTO PHILADELPHIA TO DESTROY SUCH BEINGS.

City of Philadelphia

population 1.6 million

WITH PREJUDICE.

AH, THE FIRST GUARD. POSITIONED TO DRAIN ME AND MINE OF PRECIOUS ENERGY FOR THE ULTIMATE BATTLE TO COME.

BLADES HIGH!

GOTTA GIVE IT TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON, HE'S COMMITTED TO THE METHODOLOGY THAT DEFEATED THE BRITISH AND GAVE BIRTH TO A NEW EMPIRE.

THE FRENCH PLAYED TO SIMILAR PATTERNS...

...THUS THEIR DOWNFALL.

THE SAME RESULT WILL MEET THESE BLOOD SUCKERS.

I WAS RESURRECTED TO LEAD THE FIGHT AGAINST THE UNDEAD.

A FIGHT THAT WILL NEVER END.

THE DEMONS THAT SPAWNED THIS ABOMINATION LAUGH AS WE HACK AWAY AT THE ROTTING FLESH THAT SEEKS TO DESTROY MANKIND.

THESE WRETCHED SOULS HAVE NO IDEA THE ENTITIES THEIR ACTIONS SUPPORT.

THEIR FOCUS IS ONE THING AND ONE THING ALONE.

HUMAN BLOOD.

THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL HAS ADMONISHED ME FOR THINKING TOO MUCH ABOUT PEOPLE.

BELIEVING MY CONCERNS SHOULD BE RELEGATED TO THE TASK AT HAND.

BUT GABRIEL HAS NEVER BEEN HUMAN...

...NEVER TASTED THE BEAUTY AND HORROR THAT IS THE MAZE OF FLESHLY EXISTENCE.

I REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS TO LIVE AND LOVE.

AND WHEREAS MY WINGED OVERSEERS VIEW ME AS MERELY A MERCENARY AGAINST THE DARK REALM...

...I VIEW MYSELF A CONSERVATOR OF LIFE.

ALL OF US AIN'T MAKING IT OUT OF THIS.

FUNNY 'CAUSE WE HERE OVER THE SAME WANT.

IMMORTALITY.

ADAMS MADE THAT SHIT SOUND GOOD AS GOLD.

"YOU CAN LIVE FOREVER!" ALL YOU GOT TO DO IS BE A MONSTER.

THAT'S THE RUB.

TIMES LIKE THIS, I ALWAYS THINK OF MY POPS.

A GOOD MAN THAT TRIED TO MAKE IT IN A BAD WORLD.

HE WAS A MAILMAN.

mail Hat

I'D RUSH DOWN TO SEE HIM OFF EVERY DAY.

MADE ME FEEL SPECIAL 'CAUSE EVERYBODY ELSE'S POPS WAS CAUGHT UP IN SOME SHIT.

MAIL TRUCK TRUCK TRUCK TRUCK TRUCK

MINE WAS A SQUARE DUDE AND I COULDN'T HAVE BEEN PROUDER.

MAILMEN SEE ALL THE CITY.

E'RYTHING FROM THEM SHINY-ASS PARTS LIKE OUT IN ROXBOROUGH...

...TO THE SHITHOLE THAT'S THE BADLANDS.

HE AIN'T JUDGE, NEITHER. JUST WANT TO DO HIS DO AND MAKE IT BACK HOME IN ONE PIECE.

MOST OF THE TIME, THAT'S HOW IT WENT DOWN.

Just the Mailman

MOST OF THE TIME.

GANGS RUN THE STREETS OF PHILLY. 'ROUND THE BADLANDS IT'S THE BLACK MAFIA.

EVEN THOUGH HE WASN'T NO YOUNG'UN, POPS AIN'T NEVER DEALT WITH NO STREET CATS.

POW

THUD

THAT DAY, THEY HURT MY FATHER.

CLICK

NOT IN THE WAY THEY COULD'VE, JUST TOOK SOMETHING HE NEVER FOUND.

SOMETHING HE NEEDED TO BE THE MAN HE WAS.

HA HA HA HA HA HA

SEE, HE THOUGHT BEING THE DUDE WHO KEPT HIS HEAD DOWN AND ON HIS OWN BUSINESS WOULD MAKE MUFUCKAS LOOK THE OTHER WAY.

BUT DON'T NOBODY GET A PASS IN THESE STREETS.

NOW I GET HOW POP FELT WHEN I WAS RIPPING AND RUNNING.

YOU'D THINK WITH HIM ALREADY BEING DEAD, THE WORRY WOULD LESSEN. IT HASN'T.

HEY.

HEY.

HE'S GOING TO MAKE IT BACK.

SAID THAT A LOT OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS. AT SOME POINT, HIS LUCK MAY RUN OUT.

THE BABY'S MOVING.

I WANT JAMES SANGSTER SR. TO MEET HIS GRANDCHILD.

MORE TROOPS. ALL READY TO SPILL BLOOD--MY BAD, DRINK BLOOD--ON THESE PHILLY STREETS.

SOMETHING AIN'T SITTING RIGHT WITH ME 'BOUT THESE OLD HEADS.

THINKING ETERNA RUNNING GAME ON THEM DEAD PRESIDENTS.

AND I'M ALL UP IN IT.

LIKE MY POPS WAS.

BABY ME

HE JUST AIN'T KNOW IT.

WHEN A MAN LOSES BELIEF IN HIS WAY, HE LOSES A PART OF HIMSELF.

THAT'S THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

THIS WORLD HAS A WAY OF PRODDING YOU TO ITS WILL. YOU CAN HAVE FAITH IN A GOD, LOVE FOR YOUR FAMILY, BUT WHEN IT'S ALL SAID AND DONE, YOU'RE JUST FLESH AND BONE.

TRYING TO MAKE IT THROUGH LIFE THE BEST WAY YOU CAN.

THAT ASS WHOOPING STIRRED THE COLD REALITY OF HOW SHIT REALLY IS.

YOU GOT TO FIGHT FOR LIFE OR IT'S GONNA GET SNATCHED RIGHT FROM UNDER YOU.

Just the Mailman

POPS HAD TO LEARN THAT THE HARD WAY.

CLAIM TO COP THAT STEEL FOR PROTECTION. ME? I THINK HE FELT THE KINDA SCARED NO MAN WANTS TO FEEL AND DECIDED HE WASN'T NEVER FEELING IT AGAIN.

THAT ANOTHER MAN GOT YOUR LIFE IN HIS HANDS.

MAIL

GUN

THAT GUN WAS S'POSED TO SET SHIT RIGHT.

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

BUT AS MY GRANDMA USE' TO SAY...

"LIVE BY THE SWORD...

daddy

?

BLAM

1

2.

3

4

5

"...DIE BY THE SWORD."

SHE WAS RIGHT ON THAT.

PEOPLE SEE US AS MONSTERS.

BUT IN A CRAZY WAY, WE JUST LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE THAT WALKS THIS EARTH.

FIGHTING FOR LIFE.

CLICK

TO HAVE OUR PLACE IN THE WORLD.

SHUT

TOPPY WILL BE MISSED.

HIS VALUE WAS BEYOND MEASURE.

HAT STAYED ON HIS HEAD LONGER THAN HIS HEAD STAYED ON HIS BODY.

PLEASE, DETECTIVE, SHOW SOME RESPECT.

OH, MY...

LADY AND GENTLEMEN...

VICTORY IS AT HAND.

GEORGE, YOU LOOK MARVELOUS!

THE FLAP ON HIS TROUSERS WILL MAKE HIS ASS HARDER TO KISS, THOMAS.

I'VE SEEN IT ALL. A VAMPIRE IN A HALLOWEEN COSTUME.

I WORE THIS AT THE BATTLE OF TRENTON.

WHOOPTY GODDAMN DOO.

THE POWER OF THE LIGHT IS DIVINE.

WE DO NOT TIRE.

WOE TO THOSE WE ARE TASKED TO ELIMINATE.

FOR THEM THERE IS PITY.

POST, OF COURSE, THE INVITATION TO MY BLADE. BUT THIS IS NOT THE END.

FOR THE LAST OF MY WORK IN PHILADELPHIA IS UPON ME.

THE HAITIAN HAS LAID TO WASTE WASHINGTON'S SECOND LINE OF DEFENSE.

WAR IS UPON US.

IF THIS IS TO BE MY END, I WISH TO THANK ALL OF YOU FOR THE CAMARADERIE.

HAVE FAITH, SISTER TITUBA.

THIS BATTLE REQUIRES MORE THAN FAITH, BROTHER.

IT REQUIRES...

...POWER.

POPS WAS DYING.

UP 'TIL THEN, I AIN'T KNOW NOTHING 'BOUT DEATH.

HE AIN'T NEITHER.

MY MOTHER WAS SCARED AS ALL GET OUT. HER MAN--HER PARTNER--WAS LEAVING HER SIDE FOREVER.

THAT'S WHEN MY SAVIOR SETTLED MY MIND.

holds my hand

MY GRANDMOTHER'S STRENGTH TAUGHT ME THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON I EVER LEARNED.

NO MATTER HOW BAD THE MOMENT, YOU GOT TO STAND UP TO IT.

Beep Beep Beeeeeee

LIFE IS PRECIOUS.

EVEN FOR THE DEAD.

TOUSSAINT AND HIS CREW IS COMING TO KILL US.

FUCK ALL THAT NOISE.

LIGHT GOT THEIR POWER, BUT SO DO THE DARK.

LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, I FOUGHT TO STAY ALIVE ON THESE HERE STREETS.

AIN'T NO WAY I'M GONNA STOP NOW.

AFTERWORD

That's the end of story arc 4!

Now, after twenty-four issues of angry dads, sad sons, dead presidents, etc., etc., we've finally hit the promised thing...

...war.

But within this war, there will be revelations that will completely shake up the *Killadelphia* universe. I can't say a lot about it, but there's an event coming that's going to bring our entire *Killadelphia* universe together!

It's gonna be fun!

Until then, you can follow the other books in the Killaverse on Substack (rodneybarnes.substack.com). *Nita Hawes' Nightmare Blog Volume 2* is coming soon, and before you know it, *Killadelphia 25* will be knocking down your door in search of blood.

Insert Vincent Price laugh here.

Big thanks as always to my little brother who happens to be the greatest artist in the world, Jason Shawn Alexander, and the entire Killacrew—Luis NCT, Marshall Dillon, Greg Tumbarello, Nicole Palmquist, Carlos Gutierrez, Jordan Butler, Germán Erramouspe, and Sherard Jackson.

See y'all soon, and thanks as always for reading.

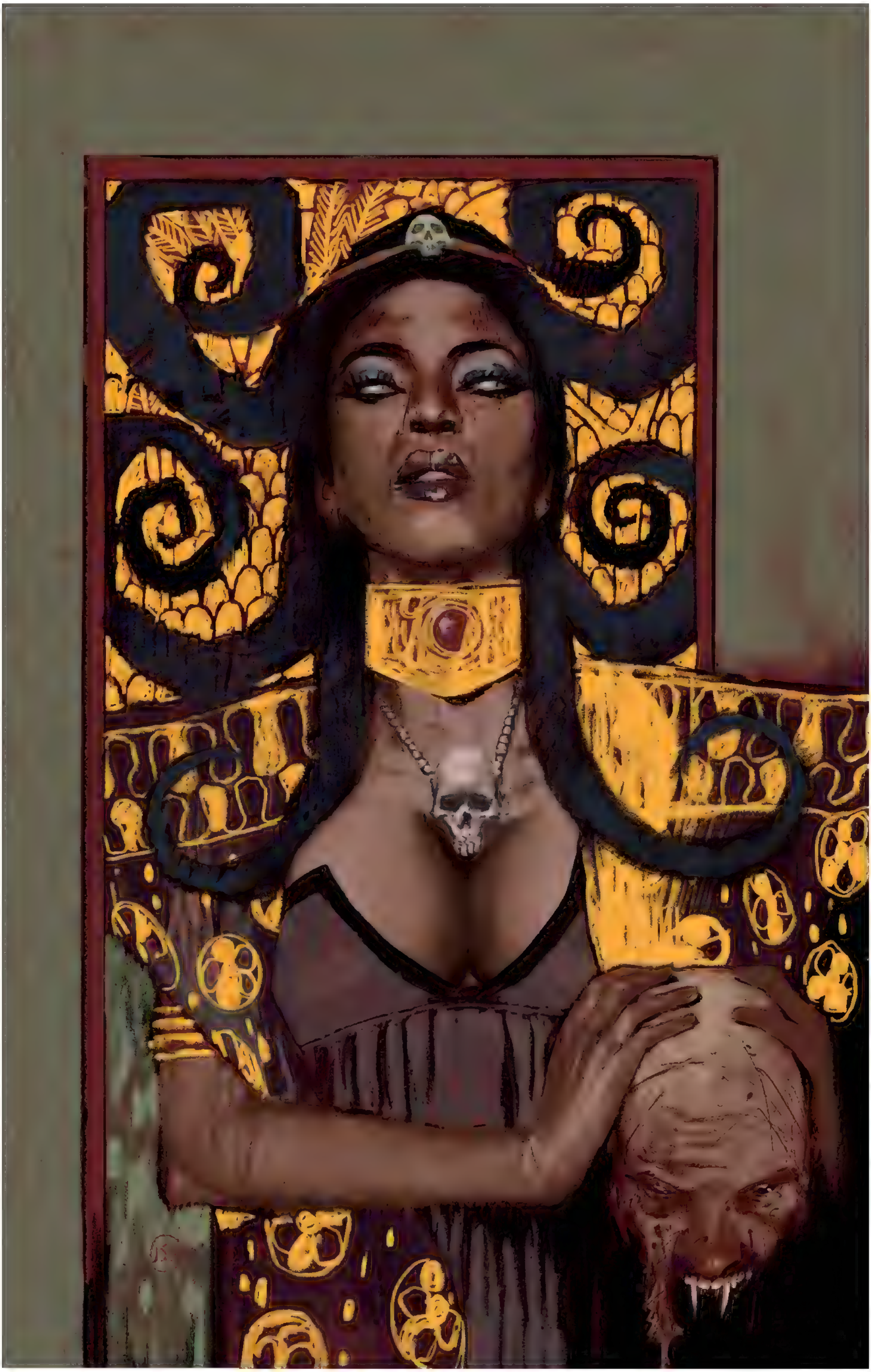
Rodney Barnes
June 2022

1_MAIN VERSIONS [19-24]
2_VARIANT EDITIONS [19-24]

COVER GALLERY

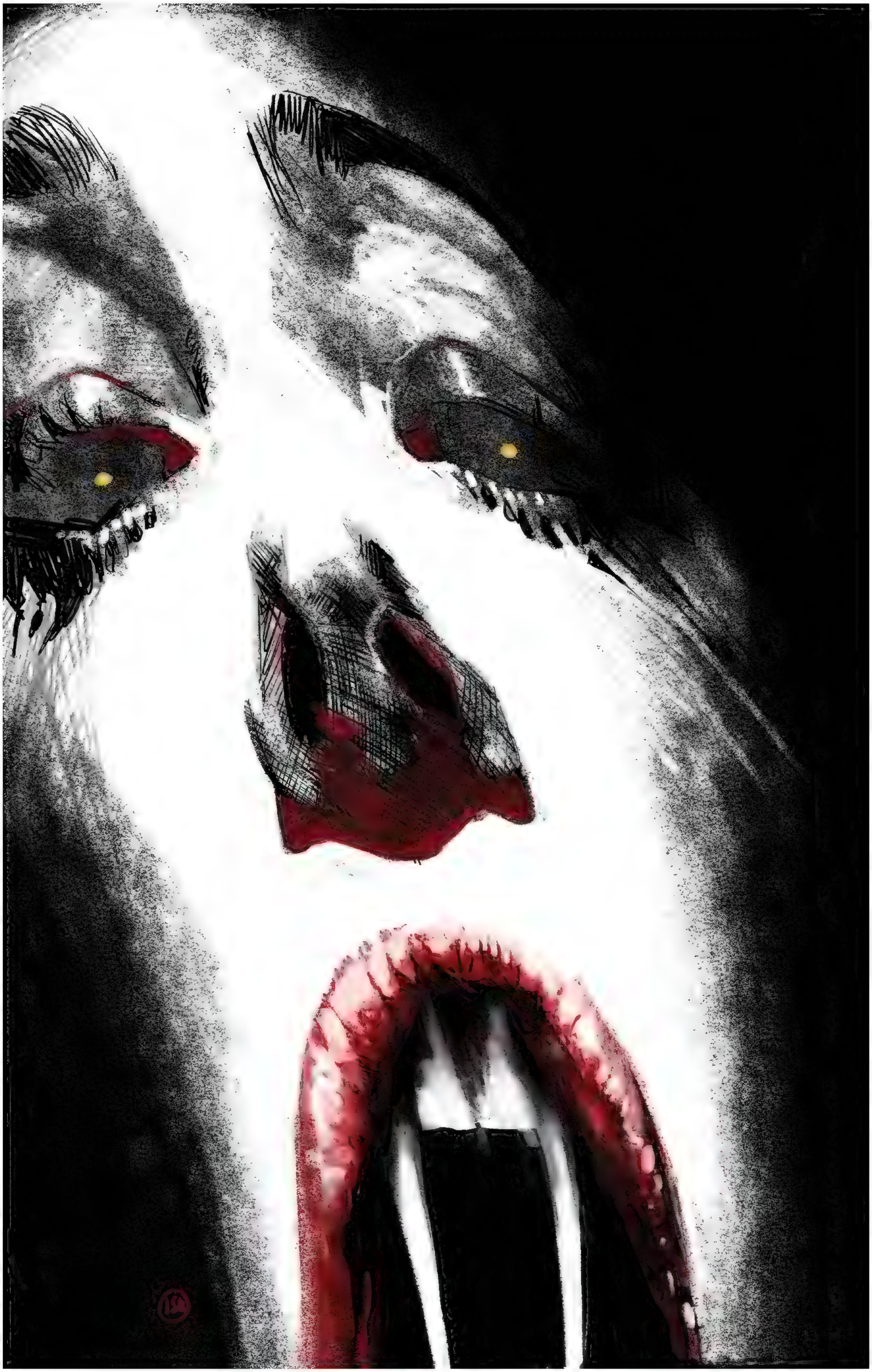
[19 MAIN] Jason Shawn Alexander

[20 MAIN] Jason Shawn Alexander



[21 MAIN] Jason Snawn Alexander

[22 MAIN] Jason Snawn Alexander
Luis NCT



[23 MAIN] Jason Shawn Alexander

[24 MAIN] Jason Shawn Alexander
Luis NCT

[19 B/W VARIANT] Jae Lee

[19 VARIANT] Jae Lee
June Chung

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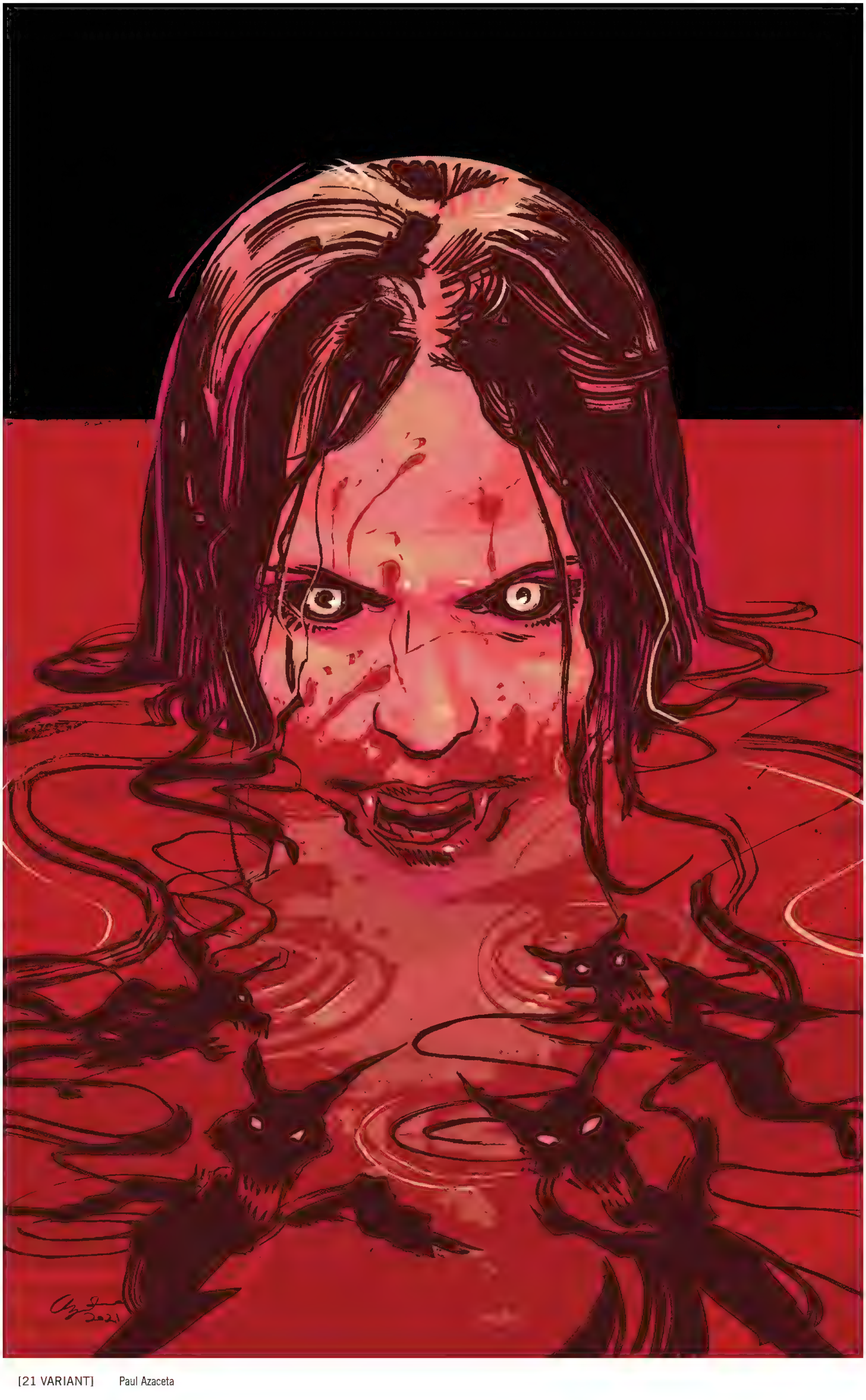
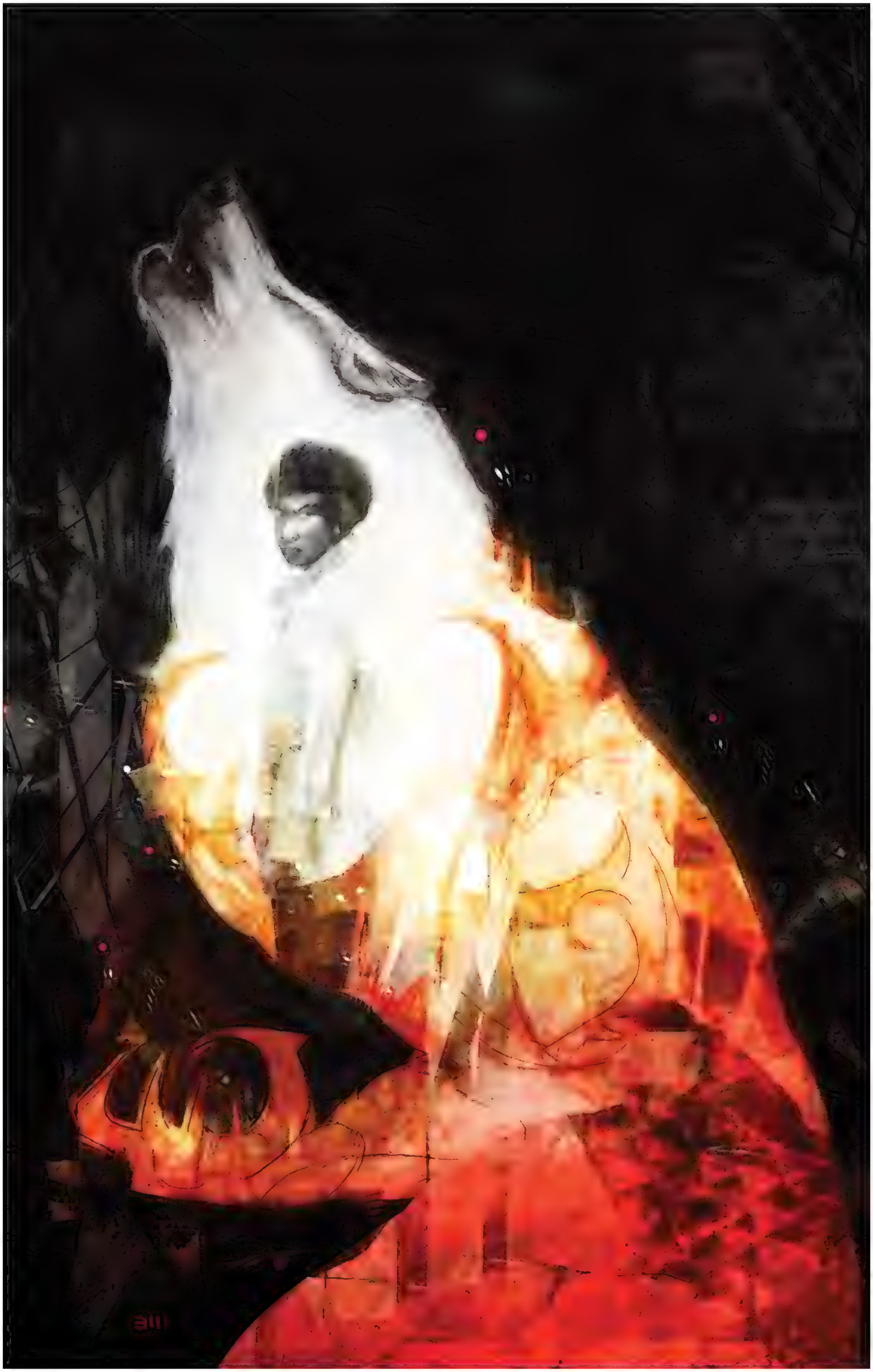
KILLADELPHIA™

[20 VARIANT] Erik Larsen



[21 VARIANT] Paul Azaceta

[22 VARIANT] Elia Bonetti



[23 VARIANT] Eli Minaya

[24 B/W VARIANT A] Kelly Jones

[24 VARIANT A] Kelly Jones
Luis NCT

[24 VARIANT B] Jeff Lemire

Page Twelve

Splash page.

Toussaint Louverture, slicing through three vampires with a single swing from horseback.

Aelio (VO): He began destroying our kind without mercy.

Page Thirteen

1/ Toussaint hops off his horse.

Aelio (VO): He and his have perfected their methods.

2/ And commences to slice and dice.

Aelio (VO): So the numbers of our kind in Philadelphia do not intimidate him.

3/ The vampires charge him.

Aelio (VO): He is without fear.

4/ He splits one down the center with a sword.

Aelio (VO): Without remorse.

5/ Then chops the heads off of the remaining lot.

Aelio (VO): Without conscience.

6/ He smiles over the fallen.

Aelio (VO): Simply stated, Toussaint enjoys his work.

7/ Then looks to the shocked humans who were moments away from being eaten.

Aelio (VO): And he should be taken very seriously.

TOP TEXT: SCRIPT BY RODNEY BARNES
BOTTOM: PRELIMINARY ART BY JASON SHAWN ALEXANDER

PROCESS: THE MAKING OF KILLADELPHIA

ISSUE 22 PAGE 12-13

"HE BEGAN DESTROYING OUR KIND WITHOUT MERCY."
"HE AND HIS HAVE PERFECTED THEIR METHODS."
"SO THE NUMBERS OF OUR KIND IN PHILADELPHIA DO NOT INTIMIDATE HIM."
"HE IS WITHOUT FEAR."
"WITHOUT REMORSE."
"WITHOUT CONSCIENCE."
"SIMPLY STATED TOUSSAINT ENJOYS HIS WORK."
"AND HE SHOULD BE TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY."

LEFT: ART BY JASON SHAWN ALEXANDER
RIGHT: COLORS BY LUIS NCT
LETTERING BY MARSHALL DILLON

BIOGRAPHIES

RODNEY BARNES

Rodney is an award-winning writer/producer of television, film, and comics. His credits include HBO's *Winning Time*, Hulu's *Wu-Tang: An American Saga*, Marvel's *Runaways*, Starz's *American Gods*, *The Boondocks*, *My Wife and Kids*, *Everybody Hates Chris*, and the Academy Awards.

He has received recognition from AFI, the NAACP Image Awards, and the Peabody Committee for his work as a writer and producer. Along with *Killadelphia*, Rodney has authored graphic novels for *James Bond: Himeros*, and *Army of Darkness: 1979* at Dynamite, *Quincredible* at Lion Forge, as well as *Star Wars - Lando: Double or Nothing*, *Mandalorian*, *Falcon*, and *Secret Empire: Birth of a Patriot* for Marvel Comics. He is the President and CEO of Zombie Love Studios.

JASON SHAWN ALEXANDER

Jason is an artist/writer who has worked in comics for over twenty years, receiving three Eisner Award nominations and the Silver Medal from the Society of Illustrators. Alongside his comics career, Jason exhibits his fine art work in galleries in Los Angeles, New York, London, Berlin, and has shown in the National Portrait Gallery at the Smithsonian.

Along with *Killadelphia*, his series *Empty Zone* has garnered much critical acclaim. Among his list of credits, he was co-writer and artist of *Spawn*, and has contributed his art to *Hellboy*, *Abe Sapien*, *Batman*, *Superman*, *The Escapists*, *The Shadow*, *The Secret*, *Frostbite*, *30 Days of Night*, *Queen and Country*, *Marvel Zombies*, *Hellraiser*, and more. He's also created art for motion comics for such films as *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Predators*, and *Mad Max*.

LUIS NCT

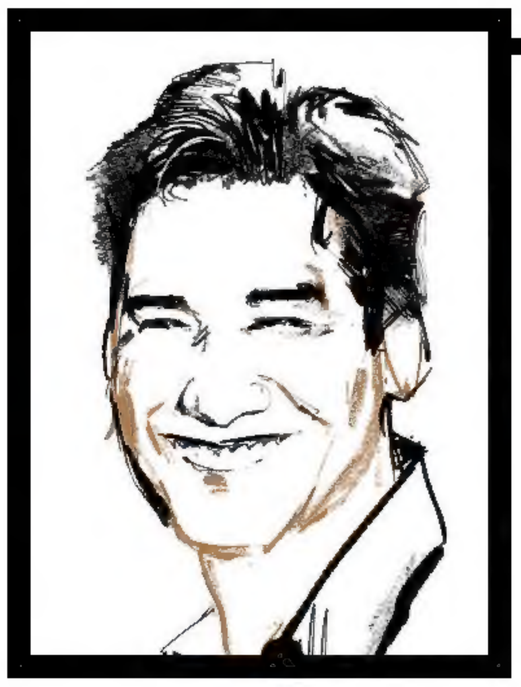
Luis is a Mediterranean storyteller, illustrator, painter, writer, and colorist who has been creating and self-publishing comic books since high school. He studied at Polytechnic University of Valencia and began his career as an illustrator, creating artwork for roleplaying games and short films.

Recent works include coloring American comic books such as *Empty Zone* for Image and *Frostbite* for DC. He's published several creator-owned graphic novels, including *Sleepers* and *Wahcommo*, and many short stories, including a critically acclaimed manga *Mina No Uta* that appeared in Japanese magazine *Tezucomi*. He also worked as concept artist and character designer on the animated feature film *Another Day of Life*.

MARSHALL DILLON

Marshall has been in the comics and entertainment industries for twenty-five years, with notable clients including the U.S. Army, the Department of Health, the BBC, Intel, and AT&T.

Franchises and properties he's worked on include *G.I. Joe*, *Transformers*, *Street Fighter*, *Mega Man*, *Finding Nemo*, and *The Muppets*, as well as various movie tie-ins and video game properties. He's very excited to contribute to *Killadelphia* and to be a part of such a dynamic and energetic team.



GREG TUMBARELLO

Greg is the Executive Editor of Zombie Love Studios. He has over fifteen years professional experience in the comics and entertainment industry, having worked as an editor, writer and producer for MTV Networks, Disco Fries Music/Liftoff Recordings, The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, Image Comics, Tokyopop, Valiant, Marvel and DC Entertainment, among others.

He spent seven years as an editor at Legendary Entertainment after cofounding and structuring their successful comic book division. During his tenure, he worked on New York Times best-selling graphic novels such as *Godzilla: Awakening* and *Pacific Rim: Tales from Year Zero*. He was an integral part of the team that brought to life Grant Morrison and Frazer Irving's *Annihilator*, which garnered an Eisner Award nomination and Frank Miller's *Holy Terror*, which launched the division as a top ten comics publisher.

NICOLE PALMQUIST

Nicole is a Swedish-Canadian artist and project manager. Ink on paper is her jam both creatively and professionally, and has made a career of it for over twenty years. She has managed print and packaging for clients such as Universal, 20th Century Fox, Sony Entertainment, and Disney.

Her art uses the language of anatomy as a muralist and body painter. She is the creator of *booleep* and experiments with traditional stop motion animation. She is thrilled to now be working on *Killadelphia* with the best storytellers in the business.

SHERARD JACKSON

Sherard is a comic book artist, animator, and writer whose work has been published by Image Comics, DC, Devil's Due, BOOM! Studios, and others. His animation work includes the Warner Bros. film, *A Scanner Darkly*, and Collection Agency Films' *Flatland: the Movie*. He is currently working on *Darbi* for Webtoon, and graphic design for *Killadelphia*.

JORDAN BUTLER

Jordan is a graphic designer and digital sculptor who has worked for McFarlane Toys for over six years on licenses such as *The Walking Dead*, *Destiny*, *Fortnite*, *DC* and *Spawn*, just to name a few. His publishing credits include working on over fifty issues of *Spawn* including the historic issues 300 and 301, among other titles. Before making the transition to entertainment, he spent twelve glorious years driving a school bus for children with special needs.

POP
POP

THE END OF ALL

After two and a half centuries, the greatest hero in American history has returned as its greatest threat! George Washington: Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army, Founding Father, First President of the United States... and all-powerful Vampire King! Now undead detective James Sangster Sr. and his werewolf allies must fight for the survival of every man, woman and child in the country. But what can they do against the very leader who won the battle for America the first time around?!

The sold-out, Eisner Award-nominated horror series by Rodney Barnes, the breakout star comics scribe and writer behind such hit shows as HBO's **Winning Time** and STARZ's **American Gods**, and Jason Shawn Alexander, the artist who redefined **SPAWN**.

Collects **KILLADELPHIA** issues 19 to 24.

"KILLADELPHIA is such a kick-in-the-head, radically brilliant take on modern vampires that you want to rejoice. Tight writing, gorgeous art and yes, genuine scares and laughs. A love letter to the genre and a ransom note to America. My brain is still spinning."

—Patton Oswalt

image

RATED **M** / MATURE
Horror, Crime & Mystery, Supernatural